

The Rising Storm

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Category: Halo, Star Wars

Genre: Romance, Sci-Fi

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2012-11-05 02:03:45

Updated: 2014-01-03 02:47:27

Packaged: 2016-04-27 03:19:38

Rating: T

Chapters: 13

Words: 41,082

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: What happens when a soldier and his wife are stumbled upon by the Galactic Republic? What happens next can only be described as total anarchy. (Cover art by: counterfox)

1. Prolouge

** Ok so this is my first story, so don't rip me a new asshole if it's not what you want. Disclaimer: I don't own Halo or Star Wars they belong to Bungie and Lucas Arts respectively. This story takes place about 20 years after Halo 4. I'm going to assume that the Chief and Cortana return to UNSC space and Cortana has reached metastability. Everything up to that point will mostly be canon with the addition of two time traveling teens from the 21****st**** century. Nobal Six will also have accompanied Marcus, Tailia, Chief and Cortana instead of dying on Reach. Corporal Andrew Sampson will stay behind instead for reasons. (If you read my Rosario-Halo cross you will know.)**

** Ok on to the techno stuff: **

Firstly, on the Star Wars ships shields. Star Wars does have some shields that can defend from projectiles (I think they are the particle shields but I'm not sure). However, they are not readily available to every ship in the verse. Only large space stations or very large capital ships would mount those types of shields. Therefore a projectile based society (Like the UNSC) would be able to utterly rape any fleet sent up against them. (Not my opinion, check out Episode 5 when they are in the asteroid field. That star destroyers shields should have protected it from the asteroid.)

**Secondly, the troopers from the UNSC are going to seem like super soldiers, this is not the case. Think, with the alliance between the Sangheili and the UNSC the jarheads would have had plenty of time to train with them. Because the Sangheili are bigger than the UNSC troopers, they would eventually be able to pick them up and hurl them

around to some extent. (Meaning anything smaller than a Sangheili would be hurled around even worse.) Plus they would receive better augmentations as they became available. (Still not to the extent of the Spartans but you knew that.)**

**At this point in time Humanity and the Sangheili would have traded tech. (Mostly the Sangheili giving the tech to Humans and them reverse engineering them and then improving on them). **

**Changes to Standard UNSC Service Armor: Energy Shields, Active Camo (ODSTs and SpecOps exclusive), Stronger and Lighter alloys to make up the actual armor, Ablative coating to help dissipate energy blasts, Motion tracker has been upgraded to show all targets regardless of if they are or are not moving. **

**No significant changes to Sangheili armor. **

**Changes to UNSC Space craft: Energy Shields, Switches close range ballistic weapons for directional energy projectors, though maintains the 50mm Point Defense Guns, Maintains MAC cannon as main armament. With the tech from the Sangheili the MAC has been upgraded, now is able to hurl a 6000 ton projectile from the heaviest of cannons. Basically the weapons take up less space but have more power, allowing the heaviest of ships to have many MACs. (Basically the power output of a MAC has been doubled.) **

New ship classes for the UNSC:

Eclipse-Class Star Dreadnought

Hood-Class Super Battleship

Jacob-Class Battlecruiser

Miranda-Class Destroyer

Mateo-Class Frigate

Changes to UNSC Infantry Armament: All infantry rifles have been standardized to the M90 Combat rifle; three modes of fire, single, 3 round burst, full-auto, under-slung attachment for grenade launcher or flamethrower, bayonet attachment, x4 scope, (ODST variant is smaller and is silenced.) Three types of grenades can be fired from the grenade launcher; High-explosive, Armor-piercing, and Anti-personal. The rifle can fire a variety of different ammo; Armor-piercing, incendiary, Full-metal Jacket, Standard 12mm rounds, and can take a plasma battery, though this causes the weapon to degrade at an accelerated rate. Looks like a cross between the Assault Rifle, Battle Rifle, and SMG. Breaks down into several components when not actively in use, reforms when drawn.

**For heavy weapons the M87 PGC (Portable Gauss Cannon) or "Doom Whomper", pretty self explanatory. Looks like a cross between the Spartan Lazer and the Rocket Launcher. **

**For long range sniping, the M91 Rail Gun. Pretty much a smaller variant of the gauss cannon but with a long range scope and a longer barrel. The standard Sniper Rifle on Steroids. **

**For extreme cases, if a trooper finds himself in melee combat, he

has a modified version of the energy sword. The "Energy Sword MKII" is more the size for humans, though those that distinguish themselves can receive the full sized ones from the Sangheili. No changes to Sangheili armament.**

**Last of the techno crap, UNSC Vehicles: (All UNSC vehicles are equipped with energy shields and ablative coatings to dissipate energy weapons fire). The space/atmosphere superiority fighter is the F-297 Blackwing. The wings are swept forward, it has a total of 8 hard points for missiles or bombs, a pair of canards behind the cockpit hold the twin 50mm Vulcan cannons. **

For ground vehicles, the M28 Mammoth MBT. A pair of 140mm smoothbore cannons, a pair of coaxially mounted 20mm cannons, a rocket pod mounted on the back left portion of the turret, and dual mounted 20mm cannons for the tank commander (Tracks operate like the scorpions). Looks like a cross between the M1A1 Abrams and the Mammoth from C&C. If you've played C&C Renegade then it looks like the Mammoth from that, with previously stated modifications.

**The M29 lancer AFV, 8 wheels, capacity of 20 troopers, gun ports allowing the troopers to fire out, 80mm cannon mounted on a turret on the roof of the vehicle with a coaxial 20mm cannon. Looks like the allied field artillery from Mercenaries 2. **

**The many variants of the Warthog have been delegated to the scouting and raiding theaters of combat along with the mongooses.
**

**The Vulture is the main aerial combat vehicle, mounted with 20mm auto-cannons to augment its armament. With lighter Hawks in support roles. The pelican was mounted with two rear-facing 20mm cannons for defense, has been increased in size and troop complement. Increased forward armament as well, permanently attached missile pods and a few hardpoints for additional armament. **

**Wolverine and cobra haven't been changed other than the addition of a 20mm cannon to the wolverine. **

No changes to the Sangheili vehicles.

(Yay, techno crap is over on to the story.)

They say one idea can change the world; well one discovery would change the galaxy. A small object floats along, from a distance nothing could be discerned about it. Just another piece of space junk, not even worth the time to recover, and salvage, however, sometimes the fates have a sense of humor.

A large ship flies next to the object, connected a tractor beam on it and started to pull it into its cargo hold. As it entered, the object rotated and 4 letters could be just made out against the pot-marked surface: U.N.S.C.

** So yeah, sorry about all the techno crap, but I figured to get most of it out of the way. Now that the techno bullshit is out of the way expect more content in further chapters. Rate and Review please, this is my first story.**

2. Chapter 1

**** Author's Note: So here we go, I promise you there will be more content this time.****

A man looks up at a holographic projector projecting an image of the strange vehicle. "So what can you tell me about it?" he asks. Another man looks up at him. The first man is tall with a mop of brown hair and a wicked scar running down the right side of his face. He is also wearing a dark brown and black tunic and trousers. He was also wore a dark brown version of the Clone trooper chest plate and shoulder paldrons. "Sir, the short version, we don't know what it is." The second man replies. He pushes a few buttons on the console and the image rotates and zooms in. "From what we can tell it's been in space for some time. Judging from the amount of pot-marks and fading of the paint, we estimate that it has been floating for about 24 years give or take." He further explained.

Anakin leaned in closer to get a better look at the object. "What does this mean?" he asked as he pushed a few buttons, and the image rotated to show the writing on the side. "We've checked the Republics database and the Jedi Archives. There is absolutely no mention of an organization called the 'U.N.S.C.'. As well, it is made out of an alloy that we have no prior experience with, and what he believe to be a type of heat shield. I'm guessing that it would normally be dropped from high orbit into atmosphere." The trooper replied. "Hm, patch me through to Obi-wan." Anakin said.

"So what you're saying is that you have found an alien artifact and the indentifying markings are written in galactic basic?" asked Obi-wan. Obi-wan was a little shorter than Anakin, with light brown hair and a beard to match. If Anakin was the personification of dark then Obi-wan was the personification of light. He wore light brown robes, tunic and trousers. He also wore the chest plate of a Clone Trooper as well as the arm armor with the symbol of the Jedi Order on each shoulder. "Yes master, so far the only thing we think we know is that it is a high orbital dropped object. We have yet to ascertain its purpose." Anakin answered. The com table beeped and the figure of a clone trooper stood at attention next to Kenobi. He saluted "Generals, we have completed the internal scans you requested and have discovered that it is hollow and can make out two forms inside. Also we have discovered another set of letters and some type of stylized artwork." He reported. "What is the new set of letters?" asked Anakin. "ODST general and the art is of a flaming skull, sir." The trooper replied. Obi-wan looked up at Anakin "I think it's time we had a chat with these aliens." He said.

Ahsoka was busy meditating when her comlink went off. Ahsoka was a Togruta, an alien native to the planet Shili. Being a Togruta, she had two montrals on the top of her hed as well headtails that flanked her face and one that went down her back. It had been three years since she had been chosen as the padawan to Anakin and she had learned alot in that time. As she grew as both a woman and a Jedi she forgone her skirt and chest wrapping for a more traditional wordrobe, though she still wore her original clothing as undergarments. "Hey snips, meet me in the cargo hold we're going to open the object." said Anakin. "I'll be there shortly master." she replied. She stood up from the mat that she was using to meditate, belted her lightsaber and left her room. It took her about ten minutes to arrive at the cargo hold. "Why do these ships have to be so large?" she asked

herself. She finally arrived at the cargo bay of the Venator-class star destroyer Madrigal, finally setting her eyes on the alien object that had caused such a stir on the ship.

It was actually larger than she had imagined, with four protuberances poking out of the top of it, as well as a viewscreen that was cut into three separate panes by two lengths of a strange metal that bent outwards as it reached the top. She arrived and stood next to her master as they waited for the engineers to arrive. "How long do you think it will take to cut through the hull?" she asked. "I don't know. We've never encountered this alloy before so it could be some time." Anakin responded. As the engineers set up their equipment one walked up to the object and started tapping on the pod to test the thickness. At that moment the hatch made a hissing sound then a pop, the hatch then opened.

"Well that was faster than expected." Anakin commented as he walked up to the pod. Several troopers approached the pod as well and Anakin stuck his head over the edge to see inside. His eyes widening in shock he called out "Get a medic up here now!" "Sir!" a trooper replied and called over his comlink to get a medic up to cargo hold one. Ahsoka walked up to her master and looked inside as well. The scans didn't lie, there were two figures in the pod but what she wasn't prepared for was the fact that one was unmistakably human.

The medic soon arrived and with the help of the Jedi and a couple of troopers, they hauled the two figures out of the pod and onto stretchers. The medic then looked up at the Jedi "From what I can tell they are both dead, the woman either from the spikes or from being frozen. The other one probably bought it when the pod froze." He said. Anakin looked at the two forms and asked "Is the other one human as well?" "Won't know for certain until the doc gets a look at them." The medic replied. Anakin looked down at the woman. If he hadn't known any better, he would have said that she was sleeping. She had a regal face, like she had been born to a royal family. Raven black hair was protruding from under her helmet. He then cast his eyes further down and noticed that she had a well toned body like an athlete. He then turned to the other figure and frowned. His helmet covered his entire face and was polarized (Though he had no idea what that means). But looking over him he noticed that he too was well toned. While the woman's armor was a shade of green his was black. Some areas were a darker black than others, as though he had been shot with some type of energy weapon. The medic walked off with the two stretchers behind him, as a trooper with blue markings and a half skirt walked up to the Jedi. "I can honestly say that I was not expecting that one, Sir." He said. "Me neither Rex, do me a favor and post some men with the doc when he does his autopsy." Anakin said. "Will do, General" Rex replied.

Ahsoka just stood there in shock at what she had seen, not only was it an alien artifact but inside was a human woman and possibly a human man. Anakin walked up to her and put his hand on her shoulder. "Come on snips, the council is going to want to know about this." He said. He and Ahsoka left the cargo bay and made their way to the bridge. As they made their way to the bridge, the two corpses were just arriving in the med bay.

"Are you certain that they are human?" Kenobi asked. "We are about the woman, as for the other one we don't know yet." Anakin replied.

"Interesting, this news is." Commented Master Yoda. "How long were they floating for?" asked Obi-wan. "Our analysis suggests that they've been floating for close to 25 years." Anakin replied. Obi-wan was in deep concentration when an alarm started screaming throughout the ship. "What's going on Anakin?" he asked. "I have no idea Master." He replied. "Trooper, what's going on?" Anakin called out to a trooper who was running for the door. "The aliens are awake, Sir!" he replied.

****Authors Note:**

>MUAHAHAHAHAHAHA. Cliffhanger, and as promised, lots more content, review as you
see fit.**

3. Chapter 2

**** Authors Note:** Alright now let's get into some action, and to Killer753895, this chapter is for you. Have fun!**

The doctor was just finishing dressing for the autopsies and turned to his charges. One was female and had two massive spikes stuck through her. The other one appeared to be male, but he couldn't tell behind the polarized faceplate of the helmet. "Computer commence recording." He said. A tone sounded, alerting the doc that the computer was recording. "Subjects are female and possibly male; I am unable to discern subject two's gender due to the armor and the helmet. Both seem to be part of the same organization, this mysterious UNSC; judging from the red crosses on the female's helmet and armor, I believe that she was a medic. While subject two appears to be from a different branch; something called the ODS." He walks over to the two people on the beds. "Causes of death vary; until I perform the autopsy on the female it is unclear whether she was killed by the spikes or being frozen. Subject two on the other hand shows no signs of bodily harm that is readily apparent; therefore I believe he was killed when they froze." He picks up a series of weapons that he had pulled off of subject two. "From what I can tell about their weapons, subject two was heavily armed. I believe he was some sort of shock trooper." He laid all the weapons back down and picked up a cylinder. "The one weapon that just throws me for a loop is this one. From outward appearances one could claim that it was a lightsaber hilt; though there are some stark differences. But that is for the armory officer." He turns back to the two on the beds and picks up a set of tongs. "I am going to attempt to remove one of the spikes." He reached forward with the tongs, grabbed onto one of the spikes and started to pull. Her eyes flew open and a gasp of pain escaped her lips as her back arched.

The doc dropped the tongs and backed away in surprise, the two troopers stiffened as they gasped in surprise as well. Unbeknownst to any of them the other one flew into action as soon as he heard the gasp of pain from the woman. He swung his legs off the bed, grabbed the doc's right shoulder spinning him around then punching him in the face. He then brought his arm around the doc's back and shoved him down as he brought his knee into the doc's chest. As he took in his surroundings, he noticed the other two people in the room. He grabbed the doc by his belt and the front of his tunic, lifted him off his feet and hurled him into the two troopers.

He walked over to the pile of people, picked up the two troopers' blasters and as one attempted to move he shot all three of them in

the head. He looked down at the blasters "Hm, it looks like something humans would design but it shoots a bolt of energy." He said. He shook his head, turned back toward the beds and walked forward. He laid the weapons onto the tray with the other weapons and leaned over the woman. He gingerly pulled her helmet off and set it beside the weapons. "This is going to hurt." He said. She nodded and he put his hands onto one of the spikes. She grimaced as his hands curled around the spike, "Ok, on three." He said. "One." He said and pulled the spike out of her. She let out a scream of pain that reverberated throughout the room. As the scream was dying down he quickly dropped the first spike, grabbed the second and ripped it out as well; the second scream damn near deafened him.

"What do you mean the aliens are alive?!" asked Anakin in an exasperated tone. "Anakin?" asked Obi-wan. "I'm going to have to call you back master." He replied. "Trooper bring up the med lab." He ordered. "Yes sir!" replied a trooper. The trooper pulled up a hologram of the med lab and Anakin took a step back in shock. He watched as the alien that was standing pull out a can with a spout and stuck the spout into both of the holes in the woman's stomach and strange foam poured out of it. The woman looked visibly relieved and the standing alien picked her up bridal style and set her down in a corner that was covered by one of the cabinets. He walked over to the weapons and picked them all up; he then walked over to the woman and handed her one of the blasters. "Ahsoka, come with me." He said and left the bridge. "Rex, meet us at the med lab with a squad of troopers." Anakin said into his comlink. "Yes, sir." Res replied.

The alien flipped one of the tables to use as cover, set out his various weapons and took stock of them. He had an Assault Rifle, two SMGs, a Magnum, frag and plasma grenades, the strange weapon he pulled off of the two people in pure white armor and the energy sword. He had a spare mag for the Assault Rifle and two spare mags for the SMGs. He had no way to know how many shots he had left in the strange weapon but he did know that he had three frags and two plasmas. Just as he finished taking stock of his weapons the door opened and a cylinder bounced through. It detonated with a bright flash and a loud noise, 'Flashbang' he thought. Then two more of the white troopers rushed through the door and opened fire on him.

The clones thought rightly that a Flashbang would've disoriented him, but they didn't take into account his helmet. With the polarized visor and auto-sound dampening, the Flashbang was useless against him. He instantly grabbed his Assault Rifle and opened fire quickly downing the first two troopers with ease. The next group of troopers who were going to rush in hesitated. Because blasters cauterize the wounds that they inflict, none of the troopers were ready for the blood and gore that his projectile based weaponry could cause. But they had been ordered to retake the med lab, so they pushed the blood and gore out of their minds and set themselves to their job.

As two troopers provided covering fire two more entered the med bay and moved forward, firing as they went. Undeterred the ODS stuck his rifle over his makeshift barricade and fired a burst at the nearest trooper. The trooper's head burst open as the rounds punctured his helmet and his skull, spewing blood and brain matter everywhere. He then felt a sharp pain in his side. Looking down he saw that one of the blaster bolts had caught him in the side. The armor was weak in that area, due to the time spent in cryo and simple design. The

second trooper ducted behind a piece of cover, just avoiding the second burst that was aimed at him. Another pair of troopers started forward under the covering fire of the two troopers but was soon driven back by the combined fire of the ODST's SMGs. As he stood to push forward he almost stumbled as the second trooper hiding behind the cover shot him in the leg. Snarling he shifted his focus to the trooper and unleashed a torrent of bullets that turned him into goo. He turned back to the door and staggered under the amount of fire he recieved. He felt a round melt through his left paldron and stike his left arm. He dove behind cover and winced as he hit his bad side and leg. He rolled up to a sitting position, pulled a plasma grenade and primed it.

Anakin and Ahsoka had just turned the corner and seen the troopers when a strange blue orb attached itself onto one of them. He started to scream then the light intensified and it detonated, throwing the troopers to the deck. The trooper who had been stuck was missing his upper half and three other troopers were black from the blast. As the troopers were getting up from the blast, the ODST calmly walked out of the med bay with his energy sword drawn. One of the troopers tried to raise his carbine to get a shot off but the ODST was quicker. He sliced the carbine in half, picked the trooper up off the ground with his left hand, fingers around the trooper's throat and stabbed him through the abdomen. His fingers loosened and the trooper fell to the ground dead. He then systematically killed the remaining troopers as they tried to regain their feet. Though he seemed to be moving slowly, as if he was injured.

Ahsoka was horrorstruck, not only was he killing defenseless troopers he was doing it without any flash of emotion. When he finished off the last trooper he took a look around to ensure that all hostiles had been eliminated, and then quickly retreated back into the med lab, limping as he went. Right before he had scanned for hostiles Anakin had pulled Asoka back behind the wall, hiding them from the ODSTs view. "That was horrible, what kind of monster kills defenseless troopers?" she asked. "Separatists." Anakin replied. Asoka said nothing as another group of troopers gathered around the door with Rex in the lead. He looked at the carnage around him and cursed. He was about to order a second assault when anakin stopped him. "Wait, let me try something." he said. The Rex nodded his head and took up a flanking position on one side of the door. Anakin activated the door controls and a burst of gunfire spattered against the bulkhead. "It's no use, you're outnumbered, and outgunned, surrender and you won't be harmed." he called out. "Bullshit! You're just trying to get me into a false sense of security then you'll gun me down like an animal!" the ODST called back and accented his words with another burst of gunfire.

He looked around after he had fired his second burst and took in his surroundings. It wasn't good, the enemy held the only way in or out and he was already halfway through the ammo on his second mag for the Assault Rifle and was halfway through his ammo on the first mags for the SMGs. "I give you my word as a Jedi that no harm will come to you. Just lay down your arms and surrender." called out the same voice again. 'What the fuck is a Jedi?' he thought. "You're going to have to do better than that if you want to kill me!" he called back firing a burst from his SMGs. "Marcus." called a weak voice. He crawled over to where his wife was sitting. The bio-foam was starting to break down and she was beginning to bleed again. 'Son of a bitch! I need to get her help.' he thought to himself. He then made a

decision, for better or worse he made up his mind.

"Master, we should just rush him! We could overwhelm him and end this." Asoka said irritably. "That would cost us many men Asoka, sometimes you need to be diplomatic." he replied. "He's not going to surrender, we should-" she was interrupted by the ODS'T's voice ringing out. "If I give myself up, will you help my wife?" he asked. Anakin jumped at the chance, "Yes, give yourself up and we will help her." he replied. "Alright, I want you and one other to come in here. Preferably not someone covered in that white armor." the ODS'T called out. Anakin looked at his padawan. "Oh you have got to be kidding me, fine lets go." she said exasperated. Anakin stuck his hand out into view of the ODS'T and stepped into the room. "I'm coming in." he called out. He looked into the room and saw the carnage the ODS'T had caused. There were at least six troopers all sprawled about the room as well as the two original guards and the doc. Ahsoka walked in right after her master and covered her mouth in horror.

The room looked like it had been a meat grinder, and for all intents and purposes it was. Blood and gore covered the walls and floor where troopers had fallen. Ahsoka had to suppress an urge to vomit as she got a good look at the person responsible. He was taller than she was though not by much; his armor was scored where blaster bolts had impacted it. He favored his right leg, suggesting that the left was injured, and he held his side. He straightened as they entered. "Colonel Marcus Mateo, 622nd ODS'T battalion." he said. "Anakin Skywalker, Jedi Knight and my padawan Ahsoka Tano." Anakin said as he gestured at her. Marcus nodded to each of them then limped over to where he had sat his wife. Picking her up bridal style he introduced her. "This is Corporal Tailia Mateo, my wife." he said.

After making sure that she was being treated, Anakin, Ahsoka, Rex and a group of troopers lead Marcus to the bridge of the ship. When they arrived they were greeted with the entire Jedi Council, all present by hologram. Marcus surveyed the bridge; there were more of those troopers standing at intervals around the bridge and many of the bridge officers all had striking similarities in their facial structure. "Masters, may I present, Colonel Marcus Mateo of the 622nd ODS'T battalion." said the man who had introduced himself as Anakin. "Remove your helmet, I want to see your face." said a dark skinned man. Marcus reached up and lifted his helmet off of his head. As he did so a collective gasp ran through the bridge personnel as they gazed on Marcus's face.

****Author's Note: MUAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA. Again another cliffhanger, keep those reviews coming in. Now I know that some of you are going to say that a normal human would not be able to lift up another human with no effort. I'll say it again, augments and Marcus has a special reason that will be revealed later. And to Killer753895, not only is this the longest chapter to date, but it is also out the same day as the previous chapter.****

4. Chapter 3

****Authors Note: I really appreciate all the attention that this story is generating. It makes me all warm and fuzzy inside. Well here's Chapter 3.****

Ahsoka had to turn away from Marcus's face. Everyone else on the

bridge and the council gasped in shock and horror. He had a strong face and it was young, almost too young to be a colonel. 'How can I judge, I was put in command of a fighter wing when I was fourteen' Ahsoka thought to herself. She looked back at his face. No, it wasn't the fact that he was so young that had caused her to turn away; it was the sheer amount of scars on his face. Some of the Clones had gotten scars as well, but his put them all to shame.

Some were small and almost unnoticeable, but there were two scars that really stood out on his face. The first one started at the top of the left side of his forehead and ended under his chin, crossing over his left eye. The other one was a pair of scars that ran from his right cheek to just above the right ear, as well as a menagerie of other scars. All of them looked old, like they had been inflicted many years before he had been frozen. 'But that doesn't make any sense.' Asoka thought. 'He's only 18, 19 at best how can he have such old scars?' she asked herself. Besides the scars she took in the rest of his face. He had striking blue eyes, much like hers though his almost seemed brighter. Maybe it was because he was so pale. He wasn't pale enough to look like a ghost, but his complexion was paler than it should have been. He had close cropped raven black hair like the woman 'Tailia? Yes Tailia'. 'In reality, he is rather handsome.' she thought.

"You wanted to see my face. Well there it is, in all of itsâ€¦ grandeur." he said mockingly. The dark skinned man had to regain his composure before he continued. "What is your name?" he asked in a shaky voice. "Colonel Marcus Mateo, United Nations Space Command, Orbital Drop Shock Troopers 622nd battalion, stationed aboard the UNSC Frigate Foreword Unto Dawn." he replied, his voice strong. "What is this United Nations Space Command?" asked the dark skinned man. "Now that's hardly fair. I told you who I was, now it's your turn. Who are you?" Marcus asked. The dark skinned man sighed. "Very well, my name is Mace Windu. I am a Jedi master and I sit on the Jedi Council to provide guidance to the Chancellor of the Galactic Republic." he replied. "Galactic Republic, never heard of it." Marcus replied.

If the bridge crew hadn't been stunned by Marcus's face, then you could have heard a pen drop after his last statement. 'Never heard of the Republic? But that's impossible! Everyone should have heard of the Republic.' Ahsoka thought to herself then voiced her thoughts. "How can you not have heard of the Republic?" she asked with a slight hint of annoyance. Marcus finally turned to Ahsoka and fully took stock of her. She was young, younger than he was but that wasn't much to go on considering how old he really was. She wore light brown and tan robes and carried one of those energy blade hilts on her hip. But when he looked into her eyes he saw something, something that had left his eyes a long time ago. Hope, he saw hope in her eyes though they were tempered by a reality that had thrust itself onto her. Hope that when their war was over, their lives would go back to normal. That they would know a time of peace for many years to come. He shook his head sadly, 'She has the look of innocence in her eyes, though it has been tempered by the things she has seen in their war.' he thought.

She felt his eyes run over her as if he was sizing her up. The thought of that made her get hot and she had to turn away. 'Why would that bother me, it's never happened before.' She thought to herself. "I'll ask you again, what is the United Nations Space Command?" asked

Windu. "The UNSC is the military, scientific, and research branch of the United Earth Governments." Marcus replied simply. "I'm not familiar with the United Earth Governments." Windu replied. "I didn't think you would be. Now if there is nothing else, I would really like to get back to my wife." said Marcus. "Unfortunately, that is not everything. We still have questions." Windu said. "The most pressing being, why did you attack our troops?" he sat back and waited. "I was woken by my wife's pained gasp as your doctor attempted to remove the spikes from her abdomen. My training and reflexes took over from there." Marcus stated simply. "That doesn't give you the right to attack my men after you cleared the Med-Bay." Rex said hotly. "I'm not sorry for my actions. If I was put in the same situation again, I would react in the same manner. Besides, your troops weren't all that interested in talking either." Marcus replied coolly. "Enough, Colonel, you ****will**** apologize to the ships company when we are done here. As well, you will be confined to quarters for the duration of your stay. Now on to our other questions." Windu said.

Marcus spent the next two hours going around in circles with the council. All the questions that they asked were questions that, under the Cole Protocol, he would be charged with treason. But he never lost his composure, calmly reciting the Cole Protocol any time they asked where Earth or any of her colonies were. Finally he broke the never ending circle. "Look, I can't give you the answers that you want. No matter how hard to press me I can't give them to you. Now, I've been away from my wife long enough, good day." he said bowing slightly, turning on his heel, and marching from the room followed by two troopers who's orders were to never let him out of their sight.

Ahsoka had taken a seat sometime ago and had begun to meditate, when he walked off the bridge. The council members were talking amongst themselves and with Anakin. "Why won't he give us the answers we seek?" asked Ki-Adi-Mundi. "He's hiding something. Besides the location of earth." replied Anakin. "The real question is what event would trigger this kind of response?" asked Windu. "Maybe we should bring him back in and question him again." stated Shaak Ti. "I believe that would be the wrong approach." said Obi-wan. "He obviously feels threatened by our continuous questioning perhaps we need to change tactics." he said. "What if we were to send someone who didn't threaten him?" asked Windu. "Who could we send? Everyone on the Madrigal is a clone, they wouldn't get very much out of him." said Shaak Ti. Asoka was quietly praying that she wasn't going to be picked to interrogate Marcus. "Ahsoka." said Anakin. "Yes, master?" she asked.

Marcus was led to the Hanger Bay where the entire ships marine contingent was formed up. He was then led to a raised dias where a podium was erected. Marcus stepped up on the dias with the two troopers flanking him. He looked out at the clones gathered and couldn't help but compare them to their UNSC counterparts. They were obviously well trained and equiped, he could personally attest to their weapons effectiveness, and they held themselves like veterans but there was one glaring difference. The men before him had an aura of hope about them, whereas with the UNSC Marines, it was just the grim knowledge that many of them were ****not**** going to be going home. He shook his head, then cleared his throat "Men of Torrent Company of the 501st legion. I wish to convey my deepest apologies to you for attacking your brethren. I was dissoriented and confused, but that doesn't absolve or justify my crime." he said. There was a murmur

amongst the crowd but it quickly died when Marcus continued. "I killed over a dozen of your brothers and I beg your forgiveness." he said. He hung his head for a moment then allowed himself to be led away.

He was led to the Med-Lab where his wife was currently. The original med lab had been shut down because of the damage it had received during his firefight, and they had to set up a field hospital in a different area. He walked through the curtain that separated the two rooms from each other and took in the area. His wife was lying on a bed connected to a machine that was monitoring her vitals. They were all stable, and she was breathing normally. "How is she doc?" he asked. The original doctor was in the morgue with the rest of the squad that had tried to take him down, this was his assistant.

The doc looked up; a flash of fear crossed his eyes but was quickly banished. "She's sleeping soundly." he replied. Marcus crossed over to her side and squatted down so that he was eye level with her. A sad smile split his lips as he remembered the last time he had seen her like this. It had been raining that day, and they had just survived a covenant attack. She had been so tired that she had just, fallen asleep the instant they stopped running. It was a bitter sweet memory; they had lost a lot of good friends that day. A low murmur snapped him from his reminiscing and pulled him back to the present. She had rolled over and was looking at him from half-closed eyes. "Hey." she said. "Hey, welcome back to the land of the living." Marcus said.

She started to sit up but Marcus put his hand firmly on her shoulder and pushed her back down onto the bed. "I just got you back, I have no intentions of letting you go." he said. She looked up at him and smiled. "Your wounds were severe but we were able to get you into the bacta tank fairly quickly. You should make a full recovery." the doc said. She looked at the doc and then back at Marcus. "How long have we been out?" she asked. "24 years." the doc answered. "That long, but what about the Ark and Halo?" she asked. "I have no idea, but until we get back to UNSC space I doubt we'll get the answers." Marcus replied. Tailia then looked back to where Marcus had entered the field hospital. Marcus followed her gaze and laid his eyes on the girl he had seen on the bridge.

Ahsoka was fidgeting with her robes as she stood there, waiting for them to notice her. When the woman, 'Tailia?' she thought, finally seen her she realized her wait was over. "Hello, what's your name?" Tailia asked in a gravelly voice. "Ahsoka Tano." Ahsoka replied, 'Her wounds must still pain her.' she thought. "How are you feeling?" Ahsoka asked. "Well, I've been better, but then again I've been worse as well. So to answer your question, I'm doing much better now. Thanks for asking." Tailia replied. "That's good to hear." Ahsoka said, and then turned to look at Marcus. As she looked into his face she could feel hers begin to heat and turned away. 'What the hell is wrong with me!? Not only am I a Jedi, but he's married for god sakes.' she thought.

"Now, I know you wouldn't have come down here of your own free will. So I'm going to take a SWAG." he said breaking her inner turmoil. "SWAG?" she asked a look of confusion on her face. "A Scientific Wild Ass Guess." he explained. "Since you're the least threatening person on this ship, your superiors decided to send you to gain my trust and then casually pump me for the information that they couldn't get out

of me. That about sum it up?" he stated. Ahsoka was dumbfounded not only had she not wanted to do this, but he had found her out and she didn't even get a chance to start. She hung her head in shame "Yes that sums it up." she said. Marcus let out a bark of laughter that caused Ahsoka to jump.

"Oh that's rich, sending a kid to get the information that they couldn't." he said. Ahsoka fumed at being called a kid "I'm seventeen, I'm not a kid." she said indignantly. Marcus was holding his gut and wiped away a tear before confronting Ahsoka. He turned and walked towards her. She involuntarily took a step back as he stood before her. He was taller than her, though not by much, but she had seen what he had done to the troopers. "Listen, I don't really care how old you are; to me you will always be a kid. Hell I'm probably the oldest person on this whole damn ship." he said. "You don't look that old to me." she said softly. "Gee thanks." he said. He turned to look at Tailia and she nodded. "Can we take this outside? Tailia needs to get some more rest." he said. "Of course." she replied. Marcus crossed over to Tailia's side, leaned over and kissed her on the forehead. He then turned and walked out of the field hospital, Asoka following behind him.

As they exited the field hospital, the two troopers fell into step behind them. "So, tell me how long has the Republic been at war?" he asked. "Hey, aren't I supposed to ask the questions?" she asked light-heartedly. "You can ask, but you'll only get the same answers I gave to the council." he replied. They continued on in silence for a few paces before Ahsoka responded. "Three years." she said. He looked over at her in surprise. "That's it, only three years?" he asked incredulously. She looked at him in surprise and disgust. "'Only three years?!' in that time millions of people have died and many planets have been decimated by the war!" she exclaimed. A sad expression spread across Marcus's face as he stopped and looked at her. Realizing that he had stopped, Ahsoka turned and looked at him ready to lash out at him again but she stopped when she saw his expression.

"Millions dead and planets decimated in your three year war. Ha, what if I told you that the war I was fighting had already reached its twenty seventh year, many billions of people had died and many hundreds planets had been glassed. How would you respond?" he asked. She couldn't find the words to counter his argument; she just couldn't wrap her mind around the numbers he was rattling off. Before either of them could say or do anything else, the entire ship shook as an explosion rocked the ship and alarms began wailing.

****Author's Note:** So yeah, not much action in this chapter but we do get some pretty good character development. I really appreciate all the reviews I've been getting, you guys are the reason that I keep writing. Oh, side note, I'm probably going to write a prologue to this story. It will start with Marcus's and Tailia's appearance before the Human-Covenant War and end after the Battle of Installation 00. Let me know what you guys think.**

5. Chapter 4

**** Authors Note:** So let's do a little recap. Ahsoka is developing feelings for a married man and she's a Jedi. Marcus and Tailia are both older than they look. They both fought in the Human-Covenant War

and they were both stationed aboard the Forward Unto Dawn at the end of the war. Thanks go out to JEP 1996 who brought to my attention that I misspelled Ahsoka's name. I have rectified the problem so now we can continue with the story.**

The ship rocked heavily under the blasts that seemed to strike all over the ship. Ahsoka was thrown across the corridor and impacted heavily on the bulkhead. As she slid to the deck unconscious, Anakin's voice rang out across the ship. "We are under attack from separatist warships all hands man your battle stations." he said. Marcus steadied himself against one of the bulkheads and watched as Ahsoka was knocked unconscious. He instantly leapt into action, rushing to Ahsoka's side and checking her pulse. 'Good, she's still alive.' he thought "You." he said, pointing at one of the troopers. The two troopers were getting up from being thrown to the ground. "Stay with her until she regains consciousness. You, where is the armory?"

On the bridge, the situation was becoming dire. "Sir, three Banking Clan frigates have dropped out of hyperspace and are firing." said a trooper. "Sir, I have separation. Enemy ships have launched fighters and boarding craft." said another trooper. Anakin cursed and pressed a button on his console. "Marines, prepare to repel boarders." he said.

Marcus was following the trooper to the armory when the ship was rocked again. "That felt like something hit us." he said. The trooper walked over to a wall terminal and activated it. "What's the situation?" he asked. Sounds of blaster fire could be heard over the com link. "We've been boarded, the general thinks they may be after the UNSC personnel." replied a trooper. Marcus looked up at the mention of UNSC personnel. He unclipped his helmet from his magnetic clamp on his back and replaced it on his head. He walked over to the trooper, put his hand on the troopers shoulder and turned him towards him. "I need you to take me to the armory now trooper." he said.

They soon arrived at the armory. Marcus grabbed his weapons, clipping the energy sword to his left thigh and his other weapons in their respective places. As well as grabbing one of the DC-15s Carbines. After gearing up, he and the trooper made their way to the field hospital. As they drew closer, more and more droids littered the approach. When they arrived at the field hospital, a large amount of droids and troopers littered the deck. They approached cautiously, the trooper's carbine, and his SMGs rose as they entered the room. Marcus rushed forward and threw back the curtain. It was empty, other than the bodies of the doc and a few troopers it was empty. His wife was already gone; as he turned to leave he noticed something about one of the troopers. There was slash across his chest 'Almost like someone killed him with an energy sword' he thought.

He pushed it out of his mind and exited the field hospital, and then he remembered something. 'Oh please Tailia' he thought and activated his tracking beacon. A nav point appeared on his hud and was moving away. 'Gotcha, I'm on my way hunny.' he thought. "Trooper, they have my wife, divert as many men as you can toâ€¦" he consulted his map "Cargo 1. That's where they are taking her." he said. The trooper relayed what Marcus said and the two set off.

Ahsoka was just coming around when she got the message from Marcus.

"What are your orders ma'am?" asked the trooper kneeling next to her. 'That's odd.' she thought, 'isn't he supposed to be watching Marcus'. She attempted to stand and nearly fell over, but the trooper caught her. "We need to get to Cargo 1." she said. "Yes ma'am, will you be able to walk?" he asked. "Yes." she replied. They set off at a run to cargo one. In a different section of the ship Captain Rex and a squad of troopers were just finishing off a group of BDs when they got the call. "General, what are your orders?" he asked into his comlink. Anakin was on the bridge directing the defense of the ship against the enemy ships when the message came through. "Rex get you and your men to Cargo 1, I'm on my way." he said.

In Cargo 1 a tall slim alien with large eyes and pasty white skin was dragging a struggling Tailia to the insertion pod that had brought her and the droids over from the Banking Clan ships. She wore a floor length skirt and a close fitting top. "Stop struggling or I'm going to have to hurt you." she said. "Fuck you!" replied Tailia. Just then Marcus and his trooper escort entered Cargo 1. "Marcus!" cried Tailia. The alien wiped around bringing one of her lightsabers up under Tailia's throat and grabbing her with her other arm. "Tailia!" yelled Marcus. "So, I grab one and the other follows." the alien said. "Get your slimy hands off my wife you bitch!" he yelled. "Slimy hands, do you have any idea who I am?" she asked. "Not in the slightest." he replied. "I am Asajj Ventress, apprentice to Count Dooku and a€|" as she was about to finish Tailia elbowed her in the ribs and then the face.

The pain and shock of the hits caused her to loosen her grip. Tailia made a break for it at that precise moment. Tailia made it halfway across the distance between Ventress and Marcus when a bright red blade sprouted from her chest. Right at that moment Ahsoka, Captain Rex and Anakin showed up. Ahsoka covered her mouth in horror and Anakin and Rex cursed.

Marcus watched the blade sprout from his wife's chest with mixed shock and horror. "NOOOOOOOOOOO!" he screamed running forward. Tailia began to fall and Marcus caught her, carefully avoiding the blade. Tears stung his eyes as he removed his helmet and threw it away. He grabbed the hilt of the blade and pulled it out, Tailia letting out a gasp of pain. Marcus stood and turned to Ventress and she recoiled at the sheer anger and hatred in his eyes. He let out a snarl and charged forward bringing down the blade as he neared her. As this was happening the troopers and Jedi engaged the droids in Cargo 1.

Ventress brought her other saber up and blocked his strike but was unprepared when his left hand went to a cylinder on his left hip. He grabbed the hilt of the energy sword, pulled it off, ignited it and ran Ventress through with it. The fighting stopped as everyone looked at the two of them. Ventress dropped her saber and looked down at the pale pulsing blue and silver blades. Marcus dropped Ventress's other saber, switched his hands so that his right hand was on the hilt of the blade and his left was free. He then grabbed her about the neck with his left hand, with drew the energy sword, lifted her up and started stabbing her repeatedly. Later, Marcus would never be able to recall how many times he stabbed her. But survivors of the battle claimed that he stabbed her at least seven times after the initial one.

After stabbing her the last time he dropped her lifeless corpse and

turned to the droids bloodlust in his eyes. He grabbed his SMG off of his hip and charged the remaining droids. The troopers finally snapped out of their reverie and reengaged the Separatist forces. Marcus was hit multiple times as he destroyed droid after droid, paying no heed to the pain. Soon the battle was over, no troopers were killed and the entire boarding party was annihilated. When news of Ventress's demise reached the commander on the flagship the remaining ships jumped into hyperspace.

After deactivating his energy sword, Marcus limped over to where Tailia was lying and knelt down. The troopers removed their helmets in a sign of respect as Anakin and Ahsoka walked up to Marcus. He lifted her up and cradled her head in his lap. She opened her eyes and looked up at Marcus. "We both knew this was coming. Our luck has finally run out." she said. She reached a hand up and caressed his face. He brought up his hand and covered hers with his. "Sing it for meâ€| one last time." she pleaded. Marcus bowed his head and began to sing. "_Os iusti meditabitur sapientiam, Et lingua eius loquetur iudicium, Beatus vir qui suffert tentationem, Quoniam cum probatus fuerit accipiet coronam vitae, Kyrie, fons bonitatis, Kyrie, Ignis Divine, Eleison, O quam sancta, quam serena, quam benigna, Quam amoena esse virgo creditor, O quam sancta, quam serena, quam benigna, Quam amoena O castitatis lilium."_ as the last lyrics left his mouth Tailia's eyes closed, with a content look on her face.

As he finished singing, he started to cry. He then wiped his head back and left out a noise that sounded like a wounded animal. Ahsoka attempted to step closer but he activated his energy sword and swung it at her. She quickly jumped out of the way and decided to stay back. He deactivated his sword, and laid her head back on the deck. He stood and walked over to where he had dropped the lightsaber and grabbed them both. He clipped them onto his hip, as well as the energy sword and walked back to where his wife lay. He scooped her up bridal style, and carried her away from the room; the troopers parting in front of him, clearing him a path.

Anakin and Ahsoka left Cargo 1 as well and they made their way to the bridge. When they arrived, the council was waiting for them. "Master, I don't know if I can do this." Ahsoka said. "You won't have to snips, I'll do it." Anakin said. They walked up to the holo-projector and Anakin began relaying the news.

Marcus was sitting in the refurbished med lab with his wife. He had his head in his hands and was crying. You could see the tears running down his face. The door opened and the stepping told him that it was Ahsoka that had entered. She stopped several paces away from him, remembering what he had done last time. He pulled his hands away from his face and put them on his knees as he leaned back, wincing as he did. "I won't lash out at you this time. She wouldn't want that." he said. She cautiously took a step forward. A sad smile crossed his face. "I really scared you didn't I?" he asked.

She was surprised; she had expected to see an emotional wreck. Instead, she saw a man who had come to terms with a close one's death. "Yes you did. Not only when you lashed out at me but when you killed Vent-." she replied truthfully. "DON'T, mention her name." he said venomously. She winced but she understood he would always hate the person who killed his wife. "So tell me, why did you come down here?" he asked. "The councilâ€|" she began but was interrupted. "Oh, the council wants to see me. Well ain't that sweet." he said

mockingly. "Well then let's go meet with the council." he said standing. They exited the med lab but he paused and turned to the troopers standing guard. "If I find out either of you allowed anyone in and they disturbed my wife's body, I'll send you to join your brothers." he said. Both troopers stood straighter after he made his statement. He turned and followed Ahsoka to the bridge.

When the bridge doors opened the entire bridge went silent as Marcus stepped onto it. Anakin nodded to him and stepped aside and Marcus walked up to the holo-projector. "We congratulate you on your defeat of Ventress." Windu said. Marcus visibly tensed at the mention of her name. "The Republic owes you a great debt Colonel, and I would like to pass on my sincerest condolences on the loss of your wife." said Obi-wan. "If there is anything we can do, just let us know." Ki-Adi-Mundi stated. Marcus considered for a moment. "I want to go home." he said simply.

****Author's Note:** So, yeahâ€¦ chapter 4. I know I'm going to get a lot of fire about how I handled Ventress's death, but think about it. She had one less saber; she was unprepared for the ferocity of Marcus's attack and she was afraid. Yes afraid, have you ever looked into the eyes of someone who had just lost someone. Now amplify that a thousand fold and throw on top she was killed and you get a recipe for disaster. Plus when she realized that it was directed at her she became afraid. Yes she had the force but it can only warn you of something. You have to be the one to react to it. Then you throw in he had two blades, the one from his wife and the energy sword and you pretty much guarantee her death. But other than that I think this chapter went well. Let me know what you think. ******

6. Chapter 5

****Author's Note:** JEP 1996 the prologue tells you how advanced the UNSC is, and I just finished Halo 4 yesterday and I don't think I would be able to incorporate anything in from that game. Maybe have the weapons form around the trigger but that's it. To Edboy4926 it was either kill her in one last act of defiance or have her captured and tortured to the point of being a vegetable, and then have Marcus be the one to kill her. So I went with the honorable thing, anyway Chapter 5.******

Everyone on the bridge was stunned into silence. No longer did Marcus look like a force to be reckoned with, when they looked at him they saw only weariness. 'He really has been gone from his home for a very long time.' Ahsoka thought. "Very well, Skywalker and the Madrigal will escort you home." said Windu. Anakin looked up at this "Master me and my ship would be put to better services on the front line, not as a passenger liner." he said. "This is not open to discussion Anakin. He provided a service to the Republic; the least we can do is send him home." said Obi-wan. Anakin look begrudgingly at the ground. "Besides you get to be the first person to make first contact with another government. And do try to be on your best behavior, if we can we want them to come into the war on our side, or at the very least remain neutral." Obi-wan continued.

Anakin looked back up "Yes master." he said. "Excellent, now there is just one small matter to deal with." Ki-Adi-Mundi said. All eyes turned expectantly to Marcus. He shifted uncomfortably "I can't nor will I give you the exact coordinates to any UNSC colony." he said. All

the council members looked exasperated and were about to start talking at once but Marcus headed them off. "However, I can take you to the edge of UNSC space. That is the best I can do without breaking the Cole Protocol." he said. After a moment Yoda nodded his assent. Marcus visibly relaxed and the bridge crew began preparations for the jump to hyperspace. Ahsoka then noticed something, odd. Marcus's left hand was twitching. Marcus stepped up to the table with the star maps and input a set of coordinates. A red dot appeared on the map and the ship entered hyperspace.

Anakin ordered one of the troopers on the bridge to show Marcus where he would be staying. It would take almost a week to get to the coordinates, so they gave him one of the spare quarters. Ahsoka needed to talk with Marcus so she headed for his quarters. As she approached his room the sounds of an arc welder could be heard. "Damn it, every time I go into combat this thing always gets hit." she heard Marcus say. She turned to knock and the door opened, she had to cover her mouth to keep from gasping. Marcus was shirtless giving her a good look at his toned body but that wasn't what made her want to gasp. His upper torso was covered in scars, ranging from lines like on his face to big splotches like he had been hit with some kind of fire weapon. That wasn't the worst part, his entire left arm starting from the shoulder and going all the way down, was mechanical.

Marcus looked up when he heard the door open and saw Ahsoka's expression. He put down the tool he was using and looked at her with an impish grin. Then he lifted up his left arm "Guess I should've told you about this." he said. She ripped her eyes from his arm and turned back to him. "Well it does explain some things." she said. He picked up the tool and was about to continue working when he looked back at her. She was blushing slightly, being in the same room as him and with him bare chested. "You wouldn't happen to know a good mechanic would you?" he asked. She looked at him as he gestured at the melted servos and cables. She winced as she noticed that that area had been a darker black on his armor before the seps had shown up. She then noticed some new scars on him. She hung her head in shame; she knew that some of those had been inflicted by troopers. Looking back at him "Actually I think I do know someone." she said thoughtfully.

Marcus donned a shirt and followed Ahsoka as she made her way to the hanger bay. Anakin was working on his fighter when he felt Ahsoka and Marcus walk up behind him. He stood and turned to face them and had to take a step back. Marcus's left arm was mechanical. He unconsciously rubbed his right forearm where his own mechanical arm was. "You are just full of surprises." he said. Anakin noticed several things different from his own arm. Firstly, it resembled a human arm in that it was proportionately correct, secondly his forearm, it was beefier than it should have been. "Ms. Tano tells me you're a fair mechanic." Marcus said. Ahsoka blushed at being called Ms. Tano. Anakin straightened "I've been known to fix things, yes." he said. "Good, because I need you to fix my arm." Marcus said removing his shirt so that Anakin could see the damage.

Anakin took a step forward and leaned in to inspect the damage. "Well, several servos have been fused, the casing has melted, and there is some debris catching on several activators." Anakin said. "If I didn't know any better I'd say this was caused by a plasma based weapon." he continued. "Really from what type of weapon?" Marcus asked though his tone implied he already knew the answer.

Anakin sighed "My guess, probably a DC-15a or DC-15s." he said softly. "Hm, interesting, well enough of that can you fix it?" Marcus asked. Anakin looked again and walked over to his fighter. "It should be easy enough to fix." he said, grabbing some things and walking back. Anakin then set to work fixing Marcus's arm.

Across the galaxy, in an undisclosed location, a man walks down a corridor. He was tall and wore dark brown and black robes. He was angry as he entered a room. The holo projector activated and a figure appeared. The man knelt "Lord Sidious, our plan to capture the aliens has failed and Ventress is dead. Slain by one of the aliens." he said. "I felt her death in the force Tyranus, and I also felt a disturbance in the force. Whoever these aliens are I do not believe we will see the last of them." Sidious said. "What are your orders my master?" Tyranus asked. "Wipe them out, all of them." he answered. "It will be done master." Tyranus replied.

After about an hour of working, Marcus could feel Anakin move away from him. "Done." Anakin said. Marcus looked down where the damage had been and nodded in satisfaction. He reached for his shirt and put it on as Anakin replaced his tools. "How did you do it?" he asked. "Do what?" Marcus countered. "Many powerful Jedi have fought and died at the hands of Ventress. How did you kill her?" he stated. Marcus tensed at the mention of That Person. "I just did, maybe you Jedi aren't as powerful as you think you are." he replied. Anakin got a little flustered at that comment. Ahsoka saw what was happening and feared what would happen next. "To your credit, I caught her off guard, maybe that's what you Jedi are missing, the willingness to surprise your foe." he continued. Anakin was practically fuming at this point "Alright, let me show you how Jedi operate." he said turning and drawing his lightsaber. Marcus got up, and turned his back on Anakin. "I'm not feeling it today, maybe some other time Jedi." he said, walking away. "She must have been a poor judge of character to marry a coward." Anakin retorted.

If the hanger bay was quiet before, you could hear conversations happening on the deck above and below them. Ahsoka could only stare at her master in shock and horror. 'Did he really say what I think he said?!!' she thought incredulously. Rex could also not believe his ears, the general had just insulted the deceased wife of the man who had killed Asajj Ventress. Marcus had stopped in his tracks and pulled himself up to his full height. He turned to face Anakin and he was shocked. Anakin had expected rage and fury in his eyes. Instead all he saw was; nothing. He saw nothing in Marcus's eyes and felt nothing but calm from the man. "So, you said you wanted to fight. Are you ready now?" he asked with no emotion in his voice. Ahsoka was thinking very quickly 'I have to defuse this situation fast before it gets out of hand!' she thought. She cautiously stepped in between them her arms raised. "Let's all just take a breather and calm down." she said. "Ms. Tano, Tailia thought highly of you and I would not want to see you hurt. Please leave the premises." Marcus said, still no emotion in his voice. "Yeah snips, we adults have some **discussing** to do. Why don't you go **meditate **for a while." Anakin said.

Ahsoka, realizing that there was no way for this to end peacefully, (though she didn't really want it to end peacefully) began evacuating the ground crew from the hanger. Though many remained including Rex. The two men just stood staring at each other and Ahsoka could feel them both. Anakin was barely able to control his fury at being blown

off and Marcus; all she could feel from him was nothing. She couldn't feel anything from him, no emotion at all. All she could feel was a cold calculating nothing. 'It's like what I feel from the droids' she thought. Marcus slowly drew his energy sword and waited. He didn't have to wait long however because Anakin lunged forward.

Anakin lunged forward, swinging his lightsaber to strike Marcus's right side. Marcus saw this however and almost missed blocking the strike. 'He's fast, not nearly fast enough though.' Marcus thought. He shoved Anakin's blade away and struck with a slash of his own. Anakin leapt back with the force and barely managed to avoid the strike. He landed on his feet and rushed forward again swinging down. Marcus quickly sidestepped and hit Anakin in the stomach with his mechanical arm. He sent the Jedi flying and calmly walked after him. Anakin smashed into a fighter, crushing it. He got up as if nothing happened and stood straight. Marcus then noticed something. 'His eyes, they have changed color.' he thought, and he was right. Anakin's eyes were no longer a bright blue but yellow. 'Interesting' Marcus thought. Anakin lifted the fighter and threw it at Marcus. Marcus moved to dodge, but he felt a presence behind him. A quick turn of the head confirmed it. Behind him was none other than Ahsoka, and she seemed completely oblivious to the danger, even though he knew she must have felt it. He knew what he had to do. He braced himself, stuck out his left arm and let the fighter impact him.

He went flying back, but he had managed to stop the fighter from crushing Ahsoka. But it came at a cost, by stopping the fighter his entire left arm shattered. Well shattered was a strong word. What really happened was his arm was smashed in many places and many pieces of his arm were on the ground. But that's not what hurt him, the shrapnel from his arm and his arm being smashed was what hurt him. Many of the pieces embedded themselves in his body and he could hear his left shoulder shatter, and many of his left ribs. Though to his credit, he didn't cry out. He just stood, retrieved his energy sword and got into a fighting stance. Ahsoka could feel the pain of his body but it was as if he took notice of it and filed it away for later processing. 'He really is like a machine' she thought. Anakin charged again but Marcus was too slow to dodge. The blade cut a swath from his left side and Anakin followed through, ending up on the other side of Marcus.

Marcus was just barely standing; the pain he had filed away was finally catching up with him. Using the last of his strength and the last connecting servos in his left arm, he extended a sixteen inch blade from his forearm (If you've seen underworld then it's the same blade Lucien uses). Anakin looked at him and smiled. "You think a puny blade can harm me?" he asked mockingly. Marcus just stood in his fighting stance and waited. Anakin decided to end it quickly so he rushed forward, blade outstretched, ready to impale Marcus. Ahsoka was fast but Marcus was faster. Before the blade pierced him he caught it in between the prongs of his energy sword and violently twisted his wrist. Anakin's saber spun out of his grip and Marcus swung his entire body, generating just enough momentum to bring his blade arm around for a strike. The attack was marginally successful, only barely cutting through his robes and breaking his skin. But the effect far outweighed the actual action.

Anakin was thrown down to the ground holding his stomach. Marcus stood over him his energy sword pointed at Skywalker. "You're good Skywalker." he said through clenched teeth. "But you are young,

untrained and undisciplined. How you have survived this war I will never know, but know this you may insult me, you may insult what I stand for, Hell you can insult the UNSC for all I care. But the next time you insult my wife, God rest her soul, you will not walk away from it alive!" he said calmly though that only amplified his point like no amount of shouting could. He deactivated his sword replaced it on his hip and began to leave the room. Anakin's yellow eyes burned with fury at his words. 'HOW DARE HE!' he screamed in his mind. He reached out his hand and his saber sailed back into his hand. As it did he leapt at Marcus intent on cutting the ODST down. Marcus could feel the air shift and started to turn reaching for his blade but it was a futile gesture. His wounds slowed him far too much and the pain had dulled his senses. Before Anakin's blade could connect with Marcus, a bright green blade stopped it. Ahsoka was standing between him and Marcus, her lightsaber blocking Anakin's.

"I'm ashamed of you." she said simply. She pushed his blade away and stood there. Anakin was full of shock; she was robbing him of his prize. "You lost, the match was over and yet you still attempted to strike him. I'm ashamed to have been a padawan under you." she continued. She deactivated her blade grabbed Marcus's right arm and put it around her shoulder; her left going around his waist as she helped him from the bay. Though it had supposedly been evacuated many ground crews and troopers had come to watch the fight. Anakin looked around at them angrily and stormed off. The troopers, ground crews and Rex could only shake their heads at the shameful manner of the once respected general.

****Author's Note:** I'm very sorry it took so long to get this chapter posted. Between work, my own laziness, and reading other stories I just didn't get around to it. But here it is. If you can tell I don't really like Anakin. So yeah, I just had to have him and Marcus have a fight, and I hope I didn't make Marcus seem too powerful. I had planned on making it shorter but once I started writing it; it sort of just wrote it's self. Don't worry; we are getting close to when more elements from Halo start showing up. And on a personal note to 343 Industries on the ending of Halo 4. YOU CAN'T DO THAT TO CORTANA! I feel better, if you've played the game and beaten it you know exactly what I'm talking about. Well the next chapter will come out when I get around to it. On another note, I'm planning on writing a Halo, Rosario Vampire crossover. Be on the lookout for it. Have fun guys and girls. ******

7. Chapter 6

****Author's Note:** Very soon I will be posting the first chapter to my Halo-Rosario cross. As well I plan on writing a LOTR story so be on the lookout for that as well, on to the show. To JEP 1996: you'll just have to wait and see.******

It had been seven days since Marcus's duel with Anakin and Ahsoka had hardly left his side the entire time. "It's time for your bath." she said. Marcus groaned but pulled off his shirt and his pants leaving him in his shorts. Side walls rose out of the ground and stopped when they came above his head. The basin then fills with bacta and he can feel the pain leaving his body. Even though he knows it is only temporary, it is amazing bliss. Eventually, the bliss ends and the familiar tingling effect is felt all over his body. The medical droid

had no idea how he would react to bacta, so instead of submerging him for a day they spread it out over the week they were in hyperspace. It had been different with Tailia, her wounds were life threatening so they submerged her for the entire day, instead of spreading it out. This was his last session aboard the Madrigal and he wanted his own doctor to finish putting him back together.

"How long until we arrive at our destination?" he asked. "Another couple of hours." she replied. Eventually the side walls retract back into the floor and he can leave the med lab, though it still pains him greatly to be up and about, he will not spend his time in bed. 'Besides old man, you've survived much worse than this. Reach comes to mind.' he thought. With great difficulty, Marcus dressed in his ODS armor minus his mechanical left arm, which is gone. Ahsoka had fought hard for him to keep his arm but he fought harder. Once it became clear she wasn't going to back down he took matters in his own hand. Late one night, ship time, he pulled off his left arm, left the med lab and headed to one of the airlocks and spaced his arm. Needless to say Ahsoka was furious especially since he wouldn't let them craft him a new arm until they returned to UNSC space. He stood straight and started walking to the door, but his left leg gave out and he almost fell but Ahsoka was faster. She caught him and steadied him before he could. He gave her a nod of thanks got his feet back under him and walked from the med lab.

They soon arrived at the turbolift and were about to use it when Ahsoka felt something. She turned, grabbing and igniting her lightsaber and putting herself in between Marcus and "Anakin?" she asked incredulously. Though surprised, she never dropped her guard as none other than Anakin Skywalker walked up to them. When he was ten feet away, he stopped and went to his knees. Ahsoka was stunned but Marcus only looked at the Jedi Knight, his expression unreadable. "Ahsoka, Marcus I wish to apologize for my behavior last week." he said. "It was wrong for me to strike at your wife when she had just died the day before." he continued. Marcus finally turned and walked out from behind Ahsoka, who was still too shocked to do anything. "Ahsoka is he being sincere?" he asked. Ahsoka blinked "What?" she asked still not able to wrap her mind around what was happening. "Is he sincere about his apology?" he asked aging though not harshly. She reached out with the force and touched Anakin. She recoiled in shock and surprise. "Yes, he is." she said.

Marcus just stood there, looking down on the Jedi on his knees. "I'm not the one you should be apologizing to. I can, nor will I, forgive you. Tailia, she might have. But you shouldn't be apologizing to me. The people you should be apologizing to are the crew of this ship, Ahsoka and your Council. They are the ones you should be apologizing to." he said barely keeping the contempt from his voice. Anakin winced and then nodded. Marcus then turned to Ahsoka "Has the Jedi Council been made privy to Mr. Skywalker's actions?" he asked. She shook her head "They haven't to my knowledge." She replied. Marcus turned to Anakin "I think they need to know what happened here. I'm sure you have security recordings as well?" he asked. "Yes we do." she replied. "Well then let's go to the bridge, we needed to go there anyway." he said turning back to the turbolift.

In the Goliath system, a small artificial satellite stands vigilant at the edge of the system. Petty Officer Third-Class Jason Copperfield was on one of the most boring assignments in the entire UNSC Navy. Him and two others manned Observation Satellite Bravo-27

in the Goliath system right on the edge of UNSC space. They were supposed to keep an eye out for the Loyalist Remnant but no one had seen or heard from them since they got their asses handed to them at Sigma-2-7 almost 10 years ago. But someone had to man the station and no one was going to fork out the money for a Dumb AI to take over. Jason looked over at the Chrono 'Just another 10 minutes' he thought. At that moment he felt a sharp pain in the back of his head. Rubbing where he had been hit, he turned to face one of the other 2 people on the station with him.

Ensign Daniel Weber was the highest ranking person in the entire sector. Granted there was no one else in the entire sector, but that was besides the point. He may have been several pay grades higher than Jason but they had become fast friends after being assigned to B-27. "No sleeping, you're pulling double shifts." he said with a smile. Jason groaned and shot him a look. "You're only making me take double shifts so you can try your hand at Jen again." he said. "Who's trying their hand at me?" called a feminine voice from the back. The final member of OS B-27 was Jenifer Mui. Petty Officer Second-Class Jenifer Mui was not only the third member of the crew but was the only woman in the entire sector. Naturally the hormones were very high, spending six months in space with only three people. However to Jason's credit, he never attempted to do anything about the situation. It wasn't because he was gay, he just liked having balls.

As soon as they arrived, a routine was quickly established. Daniel would hit on Jen, Jen would threaten Daniel's manhood and he would back off, rinse and repeat. Jason just decided that he didn't want any part in that, because she might have felt genuinely threatened if both of them hit on her. So when ever Daniel would try to hit on her Jason would just glue his eyes on his console. Of course what she wanted was an entirely different matter altogether.

She walked out of the living area, shoved her way past Daniel and stopped when she was directly behind Jason. She leaned down and wrapped her arms around his neck. "The water's warm, and I'm ready." she said seductively. "And I keep telling you, that I have no intentions of doing that." Jason replied making sure to keep his eyes forward. "I would be more than happy to oblige you." Daniel said with a smile. She turned her head to face him "Oh I know you would, you've wanted to get in my pants for the last 4 months. And you will never get in, so drop It." she said. Jason just listened to them arguing when a light flashed on his panel. He pressed a button, and instantly froze. What he was seeing couldn't be possible. "Get to your posts." he said quietly. They both stopped arguing with each other and looked at him "What?" they both asked at once. At that moment the alarm klaxon began going off. "Get to your posts!" he yelled. Daniel and Jen flew into action. Daniel pulled up his seat at his console and initiated the sensor array. Forgetting she was going to take a bath, Jen quickly moved from Jason's back and to her console not caring that her towel had slipped from her body and she was completely nude.

"Incoming starship, designating Bogey 1." Jason said. "I'm not detecting a slipspace rupture." said Daniel. "That's because there isn't one." said Jason. "What?! That's impossible!" yelled Jen. "Impossible or not we have a ship incoming. What have you got for me Jason?" asked Daniel. "Triangular in shape with two indentions on either side of a raised conning tower, most likely the bridge." Jason

replied. "The design doesn't match anything in either the UNSC or the Brotherhood." said Daniel. "They are hailing us." Jen said. Jason looked at her and instantly blushed a deep crimson. "Before you put it up, you might want to cover-up." Jason said quickly turning away. Jen looked at him then looked down at herself; she let out a shriek grabbed her towel and ran from the command module. Daniel let out a chuckle despite himself and the situation. "You know, she really does like you. Maybe you should take her up on some of her offers." he said. Jason looked at him then at where Jen had disappeared. "I had actually planed on dating her once our tour was over. Now, I think I will start taking her up on her offers." he then turned to Daniel. "And don't you even begin to start think of getting in the way." he said with purpose.

Now dressed, Jen returned to the command module and retook her seat. "Shall I?" she asked as if nothing had happened. Jason looked at her, then back to Daniel and he gave the thumbs up. Jason stood in front of the com screen when it went from black to static to a picture. All three of them gasped in shock at the face they saw. It was younger than they had seen from the old pictures in the Museum of Humanity. But the telltale scars were what gave him away. Then he spoke and they instantly knew without a shadow of a doubt that it was him. "This is Hotel Seirra-138 Colonel Marcus Mateo of the 622nd ODST Battalion stationed aboard the Forward Unto Dawn." he said.

**Sol System**

**March 3rd, 2577**

**Earth**

**Washington D.C.**

**UEG Capitol Building**

President Griffiths was very conflicted. On the one hand he was ecstatic to be getting his people home after so many years. On the other, however, he was wary of this Galactic Republic and it's war. When the information had been made public about the reappearance of 'The Demon Spawn' there had been a massive outcry to send a force to bring him home. Both from the civilian population as well as the military. Of course a force would be sent but it had to have the correct welcoming party, which was why he was waiting in his office. A chime sounded on his desk and he hit a button. "They're here Mr. President." said his secretary. "Thank you Heidi, send them in." he said.

The door opened and in walked three of the most recognizable faces in either the UNSC or the Brotherhood of Stars. The Master Chief in his trademark green MJOLNIR MKVII power armor cut a very imposing figure to be sure. Though he didn't outperform the Sangheili standing next to him. The imposing figure, in his silver armor with runes covering the entirety, was truly a sight to behold. When the Brotherhood of the Stars was originally founded, the Arbiter had wanted nothing to do with its leadership. Content with an advisory and military role, but the sheer volume of the outcry from the former Covenant species had compelled him to take the position of 'Father' in the Brotherhood. However the one who drew the most attention was the woman in between them. CTN 0452-9 UNSC AI Cortana was a truly remarkable individual. Not only was she Meta-Stable, but she had a

physical body. Using the most advanced robotics and prosthetics available to the UNSC; they had crafted a truly remarkable body for her (If you've seen the anime Ghost in a Shell that is the type of body she has). They managed to retain her computing power by giving her body the ability to interface with any computer. As well she has a remote transmitter which allows her to 'talk' with computers over a distance.

All three of them stood at attention with Cortana and Chief saluting, with the Arbiter doing the Brotherhood equivalent. "You all know who I am and why you are here so let's cut right too it." he said. He drew in a large breath and let it out. "I want my man back." he said. "Sir, there is the possibility that there are two of them, a very large possibility." said Chief. "I want all of our people back Chief. That's why I'm sending you two and requesting that the Arbiter join you." he said. "I would be honored to join the group that brings The Demon Spawn home." the Arbiter said. Chief and Cortana looks over at the Arbiter "What's the story behind the name?" Cortana asked. "While the Spartans are Demons, they are that way because they were made that way. The Demon Spawn was the only human to ever best a Sangheili combat group with supporting elements. I still remember the day the report came in, I was absolutely baffled. He had gone up against 15 Sangheili and a number of Kig-Yar and Unggoy, and none of them ever returned." the Arbiter explained.

Chief tilted his head in thought "I remember that day, we were trying to evacuate civilians when the line broke. Marines and ODSTs were retreating to the second line when one of them spoke up that someone named Marcus had stayed behind to hold the Covenant off. The instant I heard that I grabbed a warthog and sped off for the line. By the time I arrived there was nothing standing, then an arm stuck up from the ground. I got off the hog and went over to him, and looked at him. He was a mess, helmet gone, left arm gone, long nasty cuts on his face, and his armor all cut to hell. He looked up at me and said 'So this is it, Tailia, it's been a good run.' then he fainted. I grabbed him, put him in the hog and returned to the lines. The rest as they say is history." he said, finishing his narrative.

"Well, we are sending the Mindour Battlegroup to escort the RAC Madrigal." he said turning to the Arbiter. "What ships can you spare Arbiter?" he asked. "The CAS-Class assault carrier Shadow of Intent and her escorts will join the Mindour Battlegroup." he replied. "Mr. President, what about Nobal Six?" asked Cortana. "Nobal Six is officially retired, though I wouldn't be surprised if he miraculously found a way to stowaway and see his old friend." the President said with a wink. The group nodded in understanding. "When do we leave sir?" Chief asked. The president gave an impish grin. "Right now." he said.

**RAC Madrigal**

**Goliath System**

**Observation Deck**

Marcus looked out at the great starry expanse, drew in a deep breath and released it. 'After all these years, I get to go home.' he thought to himself. He was on the observation deck because the discussion on the bridge was not really connected to him. Ahsoka and the Council were in a heated debate over what to do with Anakin.

Mentally shrugging, he left the observation deck and headed to the morgue. Tailia had been put on ice so that she would make the trip back to Earth for a proper burial. He had developed a tradition of visiting her and telling her what had gone on that day. After that he headed to his room to get some sleep.

Back on the bridge, the debate was winding down. "Disturbing, this news is." said Yoda. "You have brought shame to the Jedi Order and to yourself." said Ki-Adi-Mundi. "Not only did you strike at a member of a government which we have had no contact with, but you insulted said members spouse. Who, if I heard correctly had been KIA the previous day in action against the Separatists." said Windu. Obi-wan wouldn't even look at Anakin "I thought I taught you better than this." he said. Anakin could only look at the ground; he couldn't bring himself to look at the masters' faces. "Ms. Tano, you will place Skywalker quarters arrest for the duration of the mission and upon its completion, you will deliver him to the temple for proper sentencing. As well you are hereby placed in command of the mission." Windu said. "Yes master." she replied. She motioned for a couple of troopers to step forward when Anakin tensed. "No." he said softly. Mace sat up in his chair "What did you say?" he asked. Anakin looked up at the masters and they recoiled, for his eyes were yellow. "I said NO!" he yelled. He accented the last word with a massive Force explosion that knocked everyone on the bridge to the ground. With the troopers out of the way, he ran for the turbolift.

When the turbolift finally stopped, he rushed out of it and made his way to the crew quarters. _"Attention, all hands. By order of the Jedi Council, General Anakin Skywalker is to be put under quarter's arrest. Approach with caution and consider armed and dangerous."_ Ahsoka said over the shipboard PA system. Anakin knew he only had one chance to do what he wanted to do. He found the quarters he needed, entered and seeing him in bed rushed forward, lightsaber raised and brought it down impaling the sleeping figure. Or so he thought.

He heard an overly loud bang and felt incredible pain in his right shoulder. The impact spun him around and lifted him off the bed. Between his surprise and the sudden pain, he let go of his saber. So it was still in the bed. He looked over to the corner and watched as Marcus stepped out, his magnum raised. "How am I not surprised that you would try to kill me before you were imprisoned?" he asked rhetorically. Anakin glared daggers at him, whilst using his left hand to try and stop the bleeding from his destroyed shoulder. He started to make his way forward but Marcus was going to have none of that. "Ah, ah, ah don't even try it, the only reason I hit your shoulder was because I wanted to hit your shoulder." he said.

Eventually a squad of troopers burst into his room and leveled their rifles at Anakin. At that point Marcus lowered his pistol and took a step back. He holstered it then clutched his left side. After the troopers led Anakin out Ahsoka entered. She looked him over "You ok?" she asked. He looked over at her and nodded. "Yeah, I'll be fine." he replied. "You should get some rest." she said, motioning over to the bed. He looked at the bed, the saber had been removed but the hole was still there. "I'm never going to get to sleep now." he said. He stepped past her and left his quarters. He wandered around for a time until he found himself at the observation deck.

He leaned his arm up against the plexiglass and stared out into

space. He heard the soft patter of footsteps behind him and he grinned. "You know you don't have to stalk me." he said. Ahsoka froze, 'How did he know I was here?' she asked herself. "Actually the last person to stalk me ended up with a bullet in his brain for his trouble." he turned to face her. "I heard you step up, augments." he explained. She nodded, remembering that he had been augmented. "Was it painful?" she asked. "Getting augmented?" he asked. She nodded. He turned away "I've felt worse pain." he stated simply absentmindedly rubbing his left shoulder where his arm would be. She nodded and looked down at the deck. "So tell me, why did you join the Order?" he asked. She was surprised by the question, but quickly hid it. She looked up from the deck at him, and then turned to the stars. "Actually I didn't really have a choice. The Order is the only thing I've ever known. I don't even know if my parents are still alive, where they are, or what their names are." she said. 'Just like Halsey's Spartans, just like Chief.' he thought. Looking over at Ahsoka, he can see her eyes are shining, like she's holding back tears. 'Oh fuck, now I've made her cry. Way to go asshole.' he thought to himself. "Look, you don't need to relive these memories. It's my fault I brought it up." he said quickly.

Whipping her eyes she turns back to Marcus. "No, it's fine. Since you asked about my past it only seems fair I get to ask about yours." she said. "Ok, what do you want to know?" he asked, relieved that she didn't start crying on him. "Why did you join the ODSTs?" she asked. He looked back out at the stars before responding. "In all honesty, it was the only thing we could do." he stated simply. She looked at him when he said that and raised her eyebrow. "Only thing you could do?" she asked. He nodded "We couldn't go home; we were scared, we were alone. It seemed like the only thing we could do that made sense." he said. She looked at him in confusion "Couldn't go home?" she asked. "Believe it or not I'm 582 years old." he said.

She looked at him for a moment then threw her head back and let out a bark of laughter. If Marcus didn't know any better, he would've sworn that he heard Tailia laughing next to him. "Oh you are funny, I appreciate what you're trying to do." she said. But when she looked at him she saw his expression. The smile on her face vanished "You're serious." she said incredulously. He nodded. She just stared at him open mouthed "But that's impossible!" she said, though it sounded more like she was trying to convince herself. "Hey, you're preaching to the choir over here." he said. She looked at him with an even more confused look on her face. Seeing her look he just shrugged. "It's an Earth saying." he explained. "You'll have to explain it to me." she said. He smiled back at her then turned to look back out at the stars. "To be honest I don't really know what or how it happened. One minute we're on a plane to an ROTC comp. The next, the plane get's hit by lightning and we wake up in some city we've never heard of. The rest as they say is history." he said.

"So you're telling me that, somehow you were teleported what 500 or so years into the future?" she asked. "Yeah pretty much." he said. Ahsoka could only stare at him. 'He says that he's 582, but how could that be true when he looks no older than me? The scars notwithstanding.' she asked herself. "So, how do you explain your appearance?" she asked. He shrugged "I can only guess that the portal had some sort of rejuvenation effect." he replied. "So, were you taken or were you willingly given up?" asked Marcus. "It was willing, though some believe the Jedi are baby snatchers, they never steal children. It is only with the express permission of the parents that

a child is taken to the temple to be taught the way of the Jedi." she replied, but he sensed that the words sounded a little too rehearsed, but he left it alone. He looked back out at the stars and started to chuckle. Ahsoka looked at him "What?" she asked. "Well, it's just all my life, I've wondered if there was life amongst the stars. Well I got my answer three years after I arrived in this time." his expression turned dark. "But, that was a very long time ago, a lot can happen in twenty four years." he said but his mood did not improve. He turned back to Ahsoka "Thank you for talking with me, it was very educational." he said giving a curt bow. "But I believe that I'm going to need some sleep." he continued as he straightened and left the observation deck.

**Three days later**

Marcus was on his way to the mess hall when he had been requested to come to the bridge. He arrived and stepped off the turbolift. The captain looked up from his console and motioned for Marcus to come over. He did so and the captain turned to face him. "Colonel, it is almost time for the recovery force to arrive." he said. Marcus nodded "Well it's about time. No offense to your chef, but I'm going to be a very happy man when I can eat food that I can identify." he said. The captain barked a short laugh and nodded his head. "I would be too, if I was in your position." he said. "Captain, I'm detecting ships." called out a trooper. The captain and Marcus turned to the trooper and walked up behind him. The captain and the trooper both froze as the ships took shape on the screen. "Unless the UNSC has completely forgone the regular construction types, then these aren't UNSC ships." Marcus said. The captain quickly twisted around "The seps have found us! All hands to battle stations!" he yelled.

The alarm klaxon began ringing throughout the entire ship. Troopers and pilots scrambled to their stations. Marcus ran to his room and quickly began donning his armor. Ahsoka found him there having trouble getting the pieces together. "What are you doing?" she asked. He looked up at her "What does it look like I'm doing?" he retorted. "We can handle this." she said. "The last time you 'handled it' my wife was killed. I think I'll do my own handling." he said. She looked down at the deck at his remark, then back up at him. "At least let me help you." she said stepping forward. He looked at her then nodded. She helped him put his armor on just as the ship began to rock from enemy fire. He grabbed his helmet, placed it on his head and started going through his weapons. He left the assault rifle, but grabbed one of his SMGs, his magnum and his sword. He turned back to Ahsoka and stepped out of his room with her in tow.

On the bridge, the captain was just beginning to realize how bad it was. No less than 20 Banking Clan Frigates had dropped out of hyper and attacked the Madrigal. Fighters had been scrambled but against the sheer numbers of Vulture Droids it was a fight to just stay alive. Many boarding craft had been launched once the fighter threat had been neutralized, and they began spreading throughout the ship.

Marcus was walking along a corridor with Ahsoka and a squad of troopers led by Captain Rex when they came across a group of battle droids. They just managed to take cover when the droids turned down their corridor. Ahsoka had developed a good strategy to quickly take them out without much of a fight. Marcus had other ideas. The instant he decided they were right where he wanted them he struck. He primed

a frag grenade and threw it. When it went off he became the killing machine 27 years of fighting Covenant had honed him to be. He stepped out leveling the SMG and unleashing a torrent of 5mm caseless rounds into the droids. Never designed to deal with projectile weaponry the entire group disintegrated under the fire. When it was over, not one droid was standing. Ahsoka and the troopers could only stare in shock. 'No wonder he was able hold off a squad of clones so easily.' she thought.

Eventually they arrived at the cargo bay where most of the boarding craft had latched on. They moved quietly amongst the crates stacked around. They froze when they heard a voice. "So this is the aliens craft, hmpf, I'm not impressed." the voice said. Ahsoka went white at the voice. 'No, not him, not now' she thought frantically. Marcus seen her expression "What's wrong?" he asked quietly. "Count Dooku." she replied simply. The troopers visibly tensed and looked around nervously. "Who's Count Dooku?" Marcus asked. "The leader of the Separatists, and a sith lord, Ventress was his apprentice." she replied and instantly regretted adding that last part. Marcus tensed and peeked his head over the crate they were hiding behind. He saw some large, dark blue droids standing behind an old man in dark brown robes. He stepped up "Hey! You looking for me?" he called out.

The reaction was instantaneous. The hulking droids turned and fired at him. He quickly dove out of the fire as the troopers began returning fire at the droids. "Cease fire!" Dooku said. The droids maneuvered their arms into standby position and took a step back, the troopers also stopped firing. Marcus stepped back out, removing his helmet and letting it clatter to the deck. "So, are the alien? I must say I am surprised to discover that you appear human." Dooku said. "Cut the act old man, I really don't care." Marcus retorted. Dooku was taken aback never before had anyone said that to him. "Come now, there is no need to be rude." he said in a conversational tone. Dooku then noticed something that had been bothering him. 'This man doesn't have a left arm.' he thought. "I am truly sorry." he said. "Had I known that the Republic had taken your arm, I would have come sooner." he continued. Ahsoka then stepped out "We didn't take his arm." she countered. Dooku looked at her "Ah, young Ahsoka, where is your master?" he asked mockingly. "Right here Dooku." said another voice.

Dooku turned again and laid eyes on Anakin. "Ah, Skywalker, I was wondering when you would show up." he said. Anakin ignited his saber and took a step forward but stopped when a burst from Marcus's SMG clattered around him. "No Skywalker, this is my fight." he said. Dooku looked thoughtfully around him. "And what fight do we have? I have no quarrel with you." he said. "Marcus, let us handle this we are trained to deal with sith." Ahsoka pleaded. "No, you have no quarrel with me. But I have a quarrel with you." Marcus said. Dooku raised an eyebrow "Oh and what quarrel do you have?" he asked. "I don't suppose the name Asajj Ventress has any meaning to you?" Marcus asked. Dooku's lip twitched. Marcus grinned "I thought so." he started circling Dooku. "My 'quarrel' is your little assassin killed my wife and my only link to life I used to know." he continued. Dooku began counter circling. "I never gave the order for her to do that." he said cautiously. "Oh no, and I'm sure she followed every single order you gave." Marcus said mockingly.

"Let's not do anything foolish." Dooku said. "I'm sorry but you've fucked up. I'm beyond foolish or any other emotion. All that matters

is that I kill you, and then destroy everything you've built." Marcus said. He raised his SMG and pulled the trigger. Dooku was only just able to draw his saber and block the rounds. Discarding his SMG, Marcus drew his energy sword and charged Dooku. Anakin, Ahsoka and the troopers quickly engaged the droids while Marcus engaged Dooku. Dooku sent force lightning at Marcus and it slammed into his chest. Flying back, he slammed into one of the bulkheads. He recomposed himself and slowly stood; wiping the blood from his mouth he grinned. "You're putting up more of a fight than your assassin did." he remarked. Dooku bristled at Marcus's remark. "The sheer surprise on her face when I ran her through should have been set in stone so that I could show you it. Unfortunately, we spaced her body." Marcus continued. Dooku snarled and let loose another bout of force lightning. It slammed into Marcus and slammed him into the bulkhead behind him again.

To everyone's surprise, he began to stand, even whilst being struck by force lightning. Dooku voiced his surprise "How can you stand?" he asked. "Because, I have felt worse pain than you could ever hope to imagine!" he yelled and rushed forward. Dooku was caught off-guard, not only by Marcus's actions but by his words. Here was a mere boy, yet he spoke with the voice and determination of a much older man. Then he felt him in the force, he felt no darkness or light in him. Just a blank canvas, with only the thoughts of what needed to be done, nothing more, nothing less. That was when he began to feel fear. He couldn't hide it; he felt genuine gut wrenching fear. This train of thought almost cost him his life. He barely raised his saber to block Marcus's blade. He looked into his eyes and recoiled. He saw, nothing, no rage, no sorrow, no pain, nothing that could possibly give him the kind of power he would need to take his lightning. Marcus shoved Dooku away and stood stock straight.

Dooku looked at him then struck. He leapt forward at blinding speed, thrusting forward with his saber. Knowing he could never possibly dodge the strike completely he shifted his stance and braced himself. The blade impaled him and Ahsoka let out a scream of anguish. Marcus's grip on his blade slackened and it slipped out of his fingers. Ahsoka made to run to him but Anakin caught her. "Let me go you bastard!" she screamed. He only held on tighter with his good arm. "He said it was his fight, so it is his fight." he said. Marcus looked up at Dooku and grinned again. Dooku was puzzled then his face contorted in shock when he felt a hand on his. Looking down he saw that Marcus was pushing the lightsaber out of his gut. "How?" Dooku asked. "You missed all of my major organs. I'm not dead yet!" he yelled. Accenting the last syllable, he shoved the blade out of him and dropped to his knees. He took a second to catch his breath then slowly started to rise. Finally up to his full height he looked Dooku in the eyes.

Dooku then recoiled. 'This man has injuries that would incapacitate any normal human. And yet he still stands.' he thought. Then he noticed something; he was weakening. Blood was dripping from his mouth and his breathing was shallow. 'So he isn't an invulnerable demon after all.' he thought. He reached his hand out and grabbed Marcus in a force hold. He lifted him off the ground and pulled him close to himself. Ahsoka finally broke free from Anakin's grip and charged Dooku. He dropped Marcus and turned to confront this new threat. Ahsoka drew her saber back and swung it at Dooku, intent at taking his head off. He easily blocked the strike and sent her flying with a force push. He turned back to Marcus and advanced on the

fallen ODS. Marcus rolled over while drawing his magnum and fired. Dooku only had time to barely dodge the round. It clipped his left shoulder and he spun around with the force of the impact. Holding his shoulder he rushed back to one of the boarding craft. Right as he was about to enter he turned back "Until next time, Marcus." he boarded the craft and it rocketed out. Marcus dropped the pistol and slumped back down to the deck.

Ahsoka pulled herself back up and rushed over to Marcus's side. The ship was still being attacked by the Banking Clan ships but one had hypered away, carrying a wounded Count aboard. When the captain had given up hope that help would arrive the trooper at the sensor array spun around. "Sir! 16 additional contacts!" he yelled. "Transponders mark them as Unknown sir." he continued. "Sir! Broadband transmission!" the comm. Officer stated. "Let me hear it." the captain ordered. **"Attention unidentified ships attacking the RAC Madrigal. You are ordered to stand down or we will open fire."** said a voice. The captain looked over at the trooper manning the sensor station. "What are the Seps doing?" he asked. "They are moving to intercept the newcomers." he replied. 'I hope they know what they're doing.' he thought.

UNSC Mindour****

Super carrier****

Bridge****

"Talk to me Harris." said Admiral Damion Whitaker. He was a veteran of the H-CW and had been ordered along with his battle group to recover one of the most well know faces of that war. Now the ship he was on was being destroyed before their eyes. 'She must have been a sight to see.' he thought. But not anymore. The diagram set to them by the observation post wasn't quite matching up with the ship they all saw. The back right part was completely blown away, her nose was smashed, and one of the two bridges was gone. "Sir they are moving to intercept." replied Harris. Damion let an evil grin split his lips. "Good, this is more fun. Power to the MAC cannons, full spread." he ordered. "Yes sir." replied another bridge officer. "Sir all ships report MACs online and fully charged. The Brotherhood ships also report pulse lasers and plasma torpedoes fully charged." said the comm. Officer. Captain Whitaker grinned evilly again. "Fire." he said.

The Mindour is a Trafalger-Class supercarrier armed with a Super MAC gun from the H-CW, three heavy MAC guns, and six light guns on swivel mounts. The next two ships were Keyes-Class Battlecruisers, armed with three heavy MAC guns, and three light guns on swivel mounts. The next two, were Miranda-Class Destroyers armed with a pair MAC guns. And finally there were two Mateo-Class Frigates, armed with a single MAC gun. In total 27 MAC guns of varying sizes. Not even counting the Archers, Close in gun systems and standard ship-to-ship weapons. And those were only on the UNSC ships, It didn't take into account the Brotherhood's ships. When the two task groups fired, it was like God himself had come to deliver his wrath.

RAC Madrigal ****

The jaw on the sensor officer dropped faster than light speed. The captain looked out the viewport and could only see bright flashes.

"What happened?" he asked. The stunned officer slowly turned to the captain. "Sir they wiped out the Sep Fleet." he said. The captain could only stand there with his mouth agape. "Sir, the big bastard is hailing us." the comm. Officer said. The captain nodded and straightened his tunic. A weathered face appeared in the holotank, with the uniform of what looked like an admiral. "This is Admiral Damion Whitaker; it would appear you're in a spot of trouble. Anything we could help you with?" he asked.

****Author's Note:** Holy fuck balls, this is the longest chapter to date. Period. So we finally meet up with the UNSC, Marcus almost get's killed twice, and he survives a duel with none other than Count Dooku. Ok so some of you are going to have a hard time figuring out the numbers I gave you so here is the breakdown. 18 years old at time of transport, transported from 2012 to 2522, spent three years as a marine then joined the ODST's, Human-Covenant War begins in 2525, fights through to the Battle of the Ark in 2552, then spends 24 years in cryo. Giving us a grand total of 582. If you doubt you are free to check my math. Another thing, Hotel Sierra is HS which stands for Honorary Spartan. I'm sure you can figure out how that happened. To those who might say that I made Ahsoka seem like a crybaby in this chapter I want you to think about it. No one ever talks about the emotional side effects of being taken from your parents in the Star Wars verse. Then out of the blue, someone calls attention to it. How would you react when you really thought about it? As always I appreciate your input, it helps me to write the story. Review as you see fit.**

8. Chapter 7

****Author's Note:** I've finally got the First chapter to my Rosario-Halo Cross up. Go check it, the name of it is A New Storm. Thanks go out to Trife, for bringing to my attention the lack of detail in my previous chapters. I have rectified the problem in all of my previous chapters. So let's get this show on the road.**

It had been three days since the Separatists had attacked the Madrigal a second time and Ahsoka hadn't left Marcus's side in that time. When the combined battle groups of the UNSC Mindour and Shadow of Intent arrived, the battle quickly descended into a one sided massacre, with the Seps on the receiving end of it.

Anakin, with the help of Captain Rex, rallied the Clones and led a counterattack on the remaining droid positions. With them defeated he willingly returned to his quarters and was once again under armed guard, though the Clones and the captain were both a little confused at his actions. But they pushed that aside as they madly ran throughout the ship repairing what they could from the battle with the seps.

Three days earlier****

On the bridge of the Madrigal, the Captain was talking to Admiral Whitaker. "Admiral, you have no idea how good it is to see you." the captain said. "I'm just glad we arrived in time to save your ship captain, well most of it anyway." Whitaker replied. The captain gave a small chuckle. "Well, we appreciate it all the same." he said. Whitaker nodded "Where is Colonel Mateo?" he asked. The captain looked at the deck nervously. Whitaker noticed and pressed "Captain,

where is he?" he asked again. "He's in the med bay." the captain replied, his head still down. "Why is he in the med bay Captain?" Whitaker asked. "During the boarding action the seps preformed, he engaged Count Dooku and was severely wounded." the Captain replied. Whitaker leaned back in his chair, his expression unreadable. "Is he alive?" he asked. The captain gave a small smile "That's the good news, he is." he replied.

Whitaker let out a breath he had no idea he had been holding. "You have no idea how important that man is to us captain, and to know he's alive takes a massive load off my shoulders." he said with a grin. "Admiral, hearing you say that takes a load off my shoulders." the captain responded. "What is his condition, can he be moved?" Whitaker asked. "Negative, he's in critical condition and our medics say he shouldn't be moved." the Captain replied. The Admiral cocked an eyebrow "Medics? Don't you have a doctor on your ship?" he asked. The Captain chuckled darkly "When your man woke up, he kinda freaked out and killed our doctor. As well as about 17 of our troopers." he replied. The Admiral pinched the bridge of his nose and shook his head. "Why, does that not surprise me? Well, I'm going to send over a medical team to take over the care of the Colonel. That should release your medics to tend to your own wounded." he said. "That would be greatly appreciated Admiral." the Captain said.

Present Day

Dr. Carol Lucas was completely baffled. Lying on a table before him was someone who shouldn't be alive. He had been missing for 24 years, and this is where they find him. He looks down at the man whom he had been tasked with keeping alive. He'd had to remove his armor to get at his wounds so he was lying in his shorts covered by a blanket. 'He almost looks nothing like in the vids' he thought. He was younger than they portrayed him, though he still had the same set of scars. Other than that he was the same though something was nagging at him that he couldn't quite put his finger on. He shook it from his mind and turned to the only other person in the med bay. She looked little younger than the Colonel did and she hadn't left his side since he had been injured. To his eyes she was rather odd, though when aliens are concerned it really shouldn't have surprised him.

She only left when she had to use the head or she needed food, otherwise she never left his side. He couldn't quite put his finger on it, but he had seen that look on many other people. The look of a concerned loved one. Then it hit him "I don't mean to pry but do you know where Tailia Mateo is?" he asked. The girl looked at him a little surprised that he had talked to her, and then a dark cloud came over her face. "I don't think it's my place to say." she said finally. He nodded, he could understand, it was up to Marcus if he wanted to put that information on the table. He looked at one of the monitors and made a mental note, then walked out of the room.

Marcus could see his family; his mother, father, sister all sitting on a bench at the park that they lived close to. He moved to join them but found himself instead at an airport. He looked around and recognized it as the airport where, so many years before, he and Tailia had been boarding the plane to take them to the ROTC competition. He spotted her in the crowd and moved to her side. As he did so the scenery changed again and he was at boot camp. He looked around himself and he saw he was in with a group of people dressed

exactly like he was. It didn't surprise him because he was in the military. The Drill Instructor stepped forward and started yelling at them. Marcus couldn't make out the words but the entire group turned and started running. As he was running it soon became apparent that the scenery changed again. Brightly colored bolts of energy and tracers flew past him crisscrossing the battlefield. Then he remembered, Harvest, first contact with the Covenant. He charged forward, firing his weapon in the direction of the enemy. _

_ The scenery continued to change, following the course of the H-CW. He met the Master Chief, got married to Tailia, and fought in almost every battle with Chief. It then culminated with the Second Battle of Earth, the Battle of the Ark, and the battle and subsequent firing of instillation 04B. He then placed himself and his wife, who had been hit by a brute spiker that one of the Flood Combat Forms was using, into one of the SOEIV pods. They then passed through the portal and everything went black. He saw a light ahead of him and he saw Tailia standing in front of it. He started running towards her with everything he had. Right as he was about to reach her the lightsaber stabbed her in the back. "NOOOOOO!" he screamed._

"NOOOOOO!" he screamed and shot up from his bed with his hand out stretched. Ahsoka who had been dozing next to him damn near had a heart attack at his outburst. She jumped back and she and the chair fell backwards, dumping her on the deck. Marcus could only sit there with his arm outstretched and drenched in a cold sweat. Slowly he dropped his arm and rubbed his face. Ahsoka stood "Doctor he's awake!" she called out. Marcus looked up and saw the all too familiar uniform of a UNSC doctor. He smirked "Bought time you bastards got here." he said. The doctor didn't even look phased in anyway. "Well, you seem to have recovered mostly from your injuries. Though the injuries themselves still remain." he said. Marcus threw the blanket off of himself and flipped his legs off the bed. Ahsoka instantly went beet red and turned away. Marcus stood wobbling and sat back down "How long?" he asked. "Three days." Carol replied.

"No wonder I'm fucking starving." he said. He stood up again and this time he didn't wobble. He straightened and took a step forward. His leg almost gave out but Ahsoka caught him before it could. "Thanks." he said, looking at her. She nodded at him and helped him from the med bay and to his quarters so that he could get dressed. Once he was dressed she helped him to the mess hall. One of the troopers who was eating there looked up and seeing Marcus he shot up. "Officer on deck!" he called out. Every single trooper in the mess hall stood to attention. Marcus was used to that sort of thing, but he never expected it from the Clones. He stood stock straight "As you were." he said in a commanding tone. The clones nodded and returned to their seats and their food.

Ahsoka helped him to a table then left to get some food for them. As he sat at the table he felt eyes on him. He looked up and looked around at all the people in the mess hall. However, their uniforms were quickly picked out of the others. They all wore the uniform of UNSC Marines though a few had the iconic red cross of medics and doctors. Every single one of them had their eyes on him. He gave a nod to them and they all turned back to themselves and started conversing amongst themselves. He turned back to the table and waited for Ahsoka. He didn't have to wait long however because she soon arrived with two trays with food. She set one down in front of him then sat across from him with her tray. He ate silently for a time;

when he finished he placed his tray in the disposal area and left. The UNSC personnel followed his progress with watchful eyes. One then reached up and activated his comlink and spoke into it.

Marcus and Ahsoka were just wandering the ship, making sure to avoid areas that had been damaged when Ahsoka's comlink chirped. She looked down at it and activated it. "Ma'am, the Captain wishes to see you and Mr. Mateo." a voice said. She acknowledged, and turned to Marcus. "The Captain wants to see us." she said. He nodded and followed her to the turbolift that would take them to the bridge.

They soon arrived, and they stepped forward towards the Captain. The Captain looked towards them and smiled. "Colonel Mateo, you have no idea how glad I am to see you up and about." he said. "As am I, Colonel." said a deep commanding voice. Marcus looked to where the voice came from and instantly snapped to attention and gave a salute that a Marine Drill Instructor would envy. Admiral Whitaker returned the salute "At ease Colonel, in all reality I should be the one saluting you. You're up there with Chief, Six, and a few others Colonel." he said. Marcus lowered his salute, and looked at the admiral. "How is the Jolly Green Giant, and the Silver Surfer?" he asked in a light tone smiling. "You can ask them yourself when you come aboard." he replied. Marcus raised his eyebrow "Chief and Six aboard?" he asked. "Among others." Whitaker answered cryptically. "Anyway, it'll be good to be back aboard a UNSC ship sir." he said. He turned to the Captain of the Madrigal "Don't get me wrong, the Madrigal is a fine ship. But it'll nice to get back to something more familiar." he said.

Admiral Whitaker then noticed something that had been bothering him "Colonel, I wasn't informed you had lost your arm, again." he said. Marcus subconsciously rubbed the stump of his shoulder. "Just a little disagreement sir, nothing serious." he said. "If losing your arm is 'nothing serious' then I'd hate to find out what you consider serious." Whitaker said forcefully. Marcus looked at the deck, unable to meet the Admiral's gaze. "I'll expect a full report when you come aboard Colonel, Whitaker out." he said and cut the link. Marcus watched as the link was cut "Aye sir." he murmured.

Marcus left the bridge and made his way to his quarters. Ahsoka made to follow him but the Captain grabbed her shoulder. When she looked at him he shook his head. Marcus eventually found himself at his quarters and he fell into his bed. Later troopers would claim that they heard noises coming from his quarters late into the night. Some even claimed that it sounded like someone was crying, but no evidence was ever found.

The Captain and Admiral discussed how Marcus was going to be transported to the Mindour for some time but they eventually decided that he would be transported via LAAT/I, escorted by the Pelican that brought over the Med team. Marcus's armor had been cleaned and repaired as best as the Clone technicians could manage. But it wasn't perfect; he was going to have to get UNSC technicians to fully repair his armor back to peak combat readiness.

He boarded the LAAT/I and grabbed onto one of the handles that extended down (like the ones in the subways). He felt the ship rock and he looked back towards the open troop bay doors. Ahsoka had climbed in as well and was standing next to him. Several Clones loaded up as well and he knew what they were there for. They were to

protect Ahsoka, who was the diplomatic envoy to the UNSC until a more proper envoy could be sent. As soon as they were all aboard the LAAT/I lifted off, and left the Madrigal.

The two transports rocketed towards the hanger bay of the Mindour. As they approached, the pilot could only watch in amazement as the Mindour grew in his viewport. When they finally arrived at the hanger bay, the ship was the only thing he could see. It completely blocked out the space behind and around it. The pilot watched as an entire hull section split open to admit them.

They flew into the hanger bay and the pilot swung the LAAT/I so that the passengers were facing the assembled welcoming party. When the troop bay doors opened, Marcus took in a short breath. There assembled to welcome him was probably the entire Marine and ODSB contingent on the ship. "_Now arriving Commanding Officer 622__nd__ ODSB Battalion._" someone said over the ship's PA system. "PRESENT ARMS!" cried out another voice and it echoed throughout the hanger bay. The sharp report of weapons being moved to the present arms position could be heard throughout the hanger bay as well.

Marcus stepped off the LAAT/I and started walking forward. He passed ranks of Marines and ODSBs as he made his way to a group of people at the head of the congregation. He recognized everyone up there except for the woman. Ahsoka and the Clones were understandably intimidated by the show of force in the hanger bay. The Clones were also smart enough to keep their weapons holstered while they were aboard.

Marcus looked around at the weapons the Marines and ODSBs were carrying and frowned. They looked familiar but he couldn't quite place them. In all honesty they looked like someone put a battle rifle, SMG, and Assault rifle in a room with some aphrodisiacs and waited for them to produce the current weapon. He shook his head and continued walking forward; noticing the uneasy way Ahsoka and her escort were moving through the ranks of UNSC personnel. He stopped when he arrived at the group and sized them up; he took a deep breath and his face split in a sneer. Standing before him was Admiral Whitaker, the Master Chief in his signature green MJNOLNIR armor, the Arbiter in his ceremonial rune covered silver armor, a woman in an ONI uniform, and another man. Dropping into a fighting stance he swung at the Chief.

The Chief easily blocked the strike and gently shoved him back, gently being relative, him being a Spartan. Marcus flew back and slid until he was at Ahsoka's feet. He looked up at her and saw the shocked expression on her face and grinned. He got back to his feet and charged back at the Chief.

They fought for a time but eventually Marcus stopped because he was exhausted. He just stood in front of Chief panting heavily. He stuck out his right hand and Chief clasped it, pulling him into a bro-hug (You people know what I'm talking about and if you don't then you're stupid JK). Marcus stepped back and grinned at the golden visor of his friend. "You crazy ass son-of-a-bitch, how the hell have you been?" he asked. Chief just shrugged "Fine." he said in his gravelly voice. Marcus nodded and looked past Chief at the other people gathered. He stepped up to the Arbiter and extended his hand. The Arbiter took it and shook, "Spawn." he said. "Split-lip." Marcus responded. He stepped up to the other man and punched him in the

shoulder "Six, I didn't think you were going to make it off the Ark." he said. Six just shook his head. He normally would have hit Marcus back but he couldn't bring himself to do it. The Colonel just looked like he had been through enough, for the time being.

Marcus turned his attention to the woman in the ONI uniform and his expression soured. 'I'm not even back in UNSC space and already the spooks are trying to pump me for information.' he thought. For some reason she looked very familiar, like he had known her for some time though he had no idea how he would have known anyone from ONI. He brushed those thoughts aside and stepped up to her. "I don't know why you're here but you'll get your information eventually. So don't fucking bother me with pointless questions that I'll answer eventually anyway." he said forcefully.

The woman looked at him with a knowing look in her eyes. "Am I really that forgettable?" she asked. That voice was the final piece that clicked into place. "Noâ€¦It can't beâ€¦Cortana?" he asked tentatively. She gave him the same look her avatar had given him so many times before and she laughed. Marcus was speechless; he had no idea how he was supposed to act with her in the physical world. She made the decision for him and embraced him in a crushing hug. He winced as she put pressure on his wounds and she lightened up. He slowly put his arm around her and looked at Chief in confusion. Arbiter then stepped up behind them as they broke the contact "I believe we have a few stories to share between ourselves, why don't we retire to someplace more comfortable." he said. They all nodded and started to walk away when Cortana remembered something. "Marcus where's Tailia?" she asked. "Yeah, god knows I own her more than one for putting me back together." said Six, while Chief nodded in agreement. All the happiness from finding his old friends and comrades instantly drained from his face. At that moment the Pelican entered the hanger bay and opened its troop bay. A long box with the flag of the UNSC draped over it was carried out from it by eight ODSTs.

Cortana gasped in horror and tears started forming in her eyes. The Arbiter growled in barely controlled rage and sadness. Six looked dumbfounded and Chief visibly tensed. Marcus looked down at the deck and just stood there. Even the unbreakable Marines and ODSTs shifted uncomfortably. Then everyone's eyes turned to the five newcomers standing in their midst.

Ahsoka had watched Marcus fight the man in green armor then do some kind of hug. He then proceeded to greet the other members of the group growing cold to the woman then warming instantly. Then the casket that held Tailia's body had been brought aboard. She instantly felt small and vulnerable when every single eye in the hanger bay was turned to her and her escort. She knew if they even moved the wrong way they would be gunned down before they could do anything, so they just stood there. An elevator at the back of the hanger opened and the Admiral stepped out and shuddered. He hadn't expected the hanger to feel so cold, though he told himself that it was his imagination. But when he saw the casket he instantly knew why it was so cold in the hanger.

He turned to the Republic envoy and walked up to them. He looked them over "Miss Tano, I'm afraid we're going to have to place you under arrest until we can figure out exactly what is going on." he said in a cool, flat tone. Ahsoka nodded her head "Of course sir." she said.

A group of ODSTs moved forward and relieved them of their weapons and escorted them from the hanger. Marcus gave Ahsoka an apologetic look then turned back to his comrades. "Come on, I need a drink." he said. The entire group let out a strained laugh and left the hanger.

****Author's Note:** Holy shit, it has been forever since I've updated. I'm very sorry but life got in the way. So now the UNSC knows Tailia is dead and no one is taking any chances. Not really much more I can say, I will now work on the next chapter of A New Storm and get it out before Christmas. Review as you see fit.**

9. Chapter 8

****Author's Note:** Ok so I got my newest chapter up for A New Storm so Merry Christmas. Now I'm going to try and get this up by Christmas. Well let's get to it. **

To say things were tense in the Goliath system would be a gross understatement. When they learned what had happened both the UNSC and Brotherhood battlegroups had trained weapons on the RAC Madrigal. Only the fast talking of Admiral Whitaker had prevented them from attacking. Needless to say they needed answers fast.

Before Marcus could enjoy his drink with his comrades, an aide to the Admiral had intercepted him and told him the Admiral needed to see him. He bade his comrades farewell for the time being and followed the aid to the Admiral. Once there he recounted everything to him. His waking and the misunderstanding that lead him to attack the Clones in the med bay, the subsequent attack by the Separatist forces, how she had been stabbed in the back by something called a Sith and her death by Marcus's hand. His duel with the Jedi Anakin and the loss of his arm when he had stopped a fighter from crushing Ahsoka, the week of recovery, the second attack by the Separatists, his duel with the Sith Lord Dooku, and the three days of coma it had left him in, the respect the troopers bestowed on him when he had awoken and his trip to the Mindour. The Admiral nodded, and waved Marcus out of the room.

Between his report and the security footage that had been hacked by the Mindour's AI tensions had been eased but not entirely. Admiral Whitaker almost got to the point of demanding that Anakin be surrendered to them to face trial for his unprovoked attack on Marcus. The captain of the Madrigal politely refused but informed Whitaker that the Jedi council had already taken steps against Anakin.

Eventually, another ship dropped out of hyperspace and moved to the Madrigal. This new ship was chrome plated and mounted no weapons of any sort. The ship docked with the Madrigal, and discharged its occupants.

Senator Padme Amadala had been chosen to act as the diplomat to the UNSC. When the hatch opened she had been expecting to be greeted by Anakin. Instead she was greeted by the ship's captain. "Senator, you have no idea how glad I am to see you." he said, stepping forward and sticking out his hand. She took it "Captain, not to seem rude, but where is Anakin, and Ahsoka? I was informed that they were in charge of the mission." she said. "General Skywalker has been pulled off the

mission and confined to quarters. Ms. Tano was sent as part of a delegation to the UNSC flagship but due to circumstances outside of our control she has been confined to the UNSC Mindour, their flagship." he replied.

"Why has Anakin been confined to quarters?" she asked. "It would be easier if we went to the bridge and I told the entire story." he said. He stepped out of the way and motioned for her to take the lead. When they arrived at the bridge, the captain explained the entire story, from the point when they found the pod to them leaving for the Mindour and the weapons of the fleet training on the Madrigal.

Padme could only sit in shock 'How could he have done that?' she asked herself. She composed herself "Captain, may I see Anakin?" she asked. He nodded and stood. Padme stood as well and followed the captain to Anakin's quarters. When they arrived the two troopers snapped to attention. The captain keyed the entrance and the door slid open. Inside was a worn looking man with messy hair. "Can you give us a moment captain?" she asked. The captain nodded and left the room. When the door closed she looked at the man who had become her husband. "What happened to you?" she asked. "The Anakin I know would never do the things you've done. Insulting a woman, and a dead woman at that, and then attacking the widow of said woman. On top of that you tried to assassinate him when judgment had been passed on you. Not only was he a widow but he was the representative of a sovereign nation that we had never had contact with." she said exasperated. She was almost in tears as she finished.

She turned back to the door "I have to go clean up your mess. If we're lucky, this won't be considered a major incident and may only demand reparations. If not we could have an enemy at our backs." she said. She exited the room without even having looked at him once. When she left a single tear slid down Anakin's face.

She traveled to her ship and boarded. C-3PO was with her and he noticed her mood. "Mistress Padme, what is bothering you?" he asked in his iconic high pitched voice. She looked at him "It's nothing 3PO, come on we better go meet the others who are here otherwise they might get jumpy." she said. She sat herself at the controls of the ship and detached from the Madrigal. Using reaction thrusters to put some distance from the Republic warship she powered her main engine and sped to the UNSC Battlegroup.

**UNSC Mindour**

**Mess Hall**

Marcus was sitting in the Mindour's mess hall with all of his former comrades. They all had a table to themselves and they had steins filled with amber beer. Six looked up from his stein and grinned. "The old team is back together again." he said. Marcus looked down at his stein "Almost." he said quietly. He then stood with his stein in hand, the entire mess hall quieted. "To those who never got to come home and to the children who got to grow up because of it." he said, his voice carrying throughout the mess hall. Everyone in the mess hall raised their steins "Aye!" they all called out. Marcus sat down and took a long draught from his stein. He then looked at his comrades "So tell me, what has happened while I've been asleep?" he asked.

"Well the H-CW ended but the Great Schism raged on for another 14 years. That ended about 10 years ago with the Loyalist Remnant's defeat at the battle of Sigma-2-7. The former Covenant species with the exception of the Prophets and the Brutes have formed the Brotherhood of the Stars. All the species have representation, but the Arbiter is the 'Head Honcho' so to speak." he said. Six continued on, explaining everything that had happened and the technological advances that the UNSC made. The final thing he talked about was one of the new classes of ships, the Mateo-Class Frigates. Marcus barely contained a snort of laughter when he mentioned them. To think someone like him had had an entire class of ships named after him. 'Of course, it's not named after me, but us.' he thought gloomily. Noticing his mood, Six decided to change the topic. "So, when are you going to fix your little problem?" he asked.

Marcus looked up and noticed that Six was looking at the stump of his left arm. "Well, unless we have access to mechanics that can scrape together an arm like the one I had then I'm all for it. Until then I think I'll wait until we get to Earth." he said. They all nodded at that and went back to their steins.

Sometime later, the hatch opened and in walked Ahsoka. The entire deck fell silent when she walked in and she suddenly felt self-conscious when every eye turned to her. She quickly scanned the room and found the man she was looking for. She quickly moved to his side "Is anyone sitting here?" she asked. "No, have a seat." Marcus replied. She gratefully accepted the proffered seat and sat down. Cortana looked at the new girl for a moment then turned her attention back to Marcus. "What I don't understand is how she wasâ€¦" she began then trailed off. Marcus nodded and pulled Ventress's lightsabers from his belt and laid them on the table.

Everyone was silent at the table as they looked at the weapons. Marcus picked one of them up "These are the weapons that killed her." he said. "If I didn't know any better, I'd say these were energy sword hilts." said the Arbiter. Marcus activated the lightsaber in his hand and the red blade sprung to life, bathing them all in a bloody red light. "It is a type of energy sword." Marcus said then deactivated it and laid it back on the table. Then he realized something "Where are my mannersâ€¦" he started. "They died on Harvest." Chief said, everyone gave a laugh then turned quiet again.

"Anyway, Ahsoka Tano, these are the other members of Ghost Team. Master Chief, one of the last remaining Spartan IIs. Thel Vadam, the Arbiter. Noble Six, a Spartan III and one of the two remaining members of Noble Team. Cortana, the super AI with a super attitude to go with. Myself, an ODST colonel and commander of Ghost. Last but most defiantly not least, my wife Tailia, resident medic, therapist, and other things I can't even begin to remember." he said pointing to each of them in turn, stopping and looking at the table when he got to the only team member not there. Marcus raised his stein, though didn't stand "To Tailia, for keeping us patched together to get the job done. May she rest, in eternal slumber." he said. Everyone around the table raised their steins and drank.

"Ghost Team, this is Ahsoka Tano. Jedi Knight, and General of the Republic Clone armies." he said. They all looked at her with questioning looks and she felt small. "I don't mean to sound rude but

you don't look old enough to be a general." said Cortana. Ahsoka nodded "That's what Marcus said." she said. The PA system chimed "Now arriving, Senator Padme Amadala of the Galactic Republic." it said. Ahsoka looked up "I should go greet her, she'll want a report. See you guys later." she said as she stood. She walked away as Marcus watched her go from over the lip of his stein. Cortana watched her leave as well then turned to Marcus. "You know she likes you, right?" she asked. "I know." Marcus said, setting his stein down. "Are youâ€|?" she began. "No, Tailia isn't in her grave yet and besides, I don't date younger women. Makes me feel like a cradle robber." he answered before she could get her question out.

She nodded understanding. He finished the last of his beer and set his stein down. "I don't know about the rest of you, but I could really go for some sleep in a UNSC regulation bunk." he said and left the group. Chief looked at Cortana "What brought that up?" he asked. "I don't know, I justâ€| it just fell out." she replied looking back at the table. "I do not believe that this was the appropriate time to bring that particular issue to light." Thel stated. She nodded, and then looked at where he had disappeared and grinned. "Should we have told him?" she asked. "Nah let him find out for himself." replied Six. They all looked at where Marcus had disappeared, then back at their steins.

Marcus made his way to Jarhead Territory on the Mindour. When he arrived he noticed a man in a navy uniform standing outside the door. "Colonel Mateo?" he asked. Marcus nodded. "If you would follow me sir." he said. Marcus raised an eyebrow but let the navy man lead him. He followed the navy man to another door with MARINE CO painted on it. "Does he want to see me?" he asked. The navy man said nothing, opened the door and ushered Marcus inside. "Your room sir." he said. It took a moment for Marcus's brain to compute what he heard then he turned to the navy man. "My room." he said back. "Yes sir, the admiral made it quite clear that this was to be your room sir." the navy man stated. Marcus looked around the room. It had been furnished exactly how he would have furnished it. Dark and dank, with a massive screen on one wall. He could already tell what it was for and his fingers flexed noticeably.

"Thank you that will be all." he said. The navy man nodded and exited the room. Marcus moved over to a table with a device on it he hadn't seen since he was on the Dawn. He activated it and familiar music rang out. _"Through the gates of Hell, as we make our way to Heaven through the Nazi lines. Primo Victoria!"_ he couldn't help but smile as the familiar lyrics blasted from the iPod dock. He had been on the receiving end of some very odd looks when he had requested one when he was rotated home for leave, and even odder looks when he put such old (for them) music on the damn thing.

He sat down at his desk and activated the terminal. With the music playing in the background, he surfed through the terminal's functions and noticed a few things. Firstly, there were a few new functions on the terminal, but that was to be expected. He had been gone for 24 years after all. Secondly there was no screen, just a holographic projection. This puzzled him because he had a screen for his favorite pass time. He shrugged 'It's not my place to question the techs.' he thought. He suddenly thought of something and opened his desk drawer. There it was the one thing that had helped him keep his sanity when he had been pulled from his time to this nightmarish hellhole. An old and slightly burned tennis ball was sitting on a piece of paper. He

grabbed the ball and the paper. '**'Found this in your quarters on the Dawn. Figured you'd want it. â€"Chief'** he read the note again to make sure he had read right. 'I fucking knew it, the Jolly Green Giant is sentimental!' he thought.

He toyed with the idea to bring it up but instantly beat the fuck out of the idea. He knew he would never live to tell anyone of his discovery, so he just filed it away and sat down at his desk. He started bouncing the ball across the room and catching it. He had discovered that the methodic thump, thump, blap of the ball on the deck, then the bulkhead then into his hand was extremely therapeutic. He continued his 'Therapy Session' until the door chimed.

The entire time he was throwing the ball; his music had continued playing so he almost didn't hear the door chime. "Music pause." he said. The steady flow of the old music was abruptly silenced, though he continued with his 'Therapy Session'. "Come in." he called out. The door opened and the previous navy man who had shown him his room entered. "Ok seriously what is with you?" Marcus asked. "I guess I never properly introduced myself. My name is Alan Lewis and I'm your personal steward." he said. Marcus let out a huff "Well Mr. Lewis, what brings you here?" he asked, still throwing the ball around. "Sir, Senator Amadala wishes to see you." he said. Marcus caught the ball, and slowly turning to face his steward, set the ball on the desk. "Well, send her in." he said.

Alan nodded and stepped aside, allowing a rather beautiful woman enter. He stood to attention as she did and gave her a once over. She held herself regally, like she was royalty. She had long brown hair up in a hairstyle that he never even knew someone could or would use. She was dressed regally as well; her dress seemed just the right shade of blue to complement her eyes and the rest of her look. "Ma'am, to what do I owe the pleasure of your esteemed visit to my humble abode?" he asked. She gave him a once over as well. The reports hadn't lied; he was handsome, in a rugged sorta way. Though she was used to the idea of scars, she hadn't been ready for the fierceness of the ones he had. They all looked like they had been inflicted years ago, and if she was to believe what she was told he was almost as old as Yoda, though not really living through the vast majority of it.

"I'd like to talk to you, if you don't mind." she said. "Of course please take a seat. Would you like something to drink?" he asked. She took the proffered seat "No thank you." she replied. He nodded and waited until she was seated then he took his seat. He looked back at Alan "I'll take a mug of hot coco." he said. Alan nodded and bowed out of the room. Marcus turned his attention back to Padme. He always hated when people interrupted his therapy sessions and would most of the time just continue anyway. However, he wasn't going to take the chance with someone like her. "What did you want to talk to me about?" he asked. She shifted uncomfortably "On behalf of the Jedi Order and the Galactic republic, I would like to apologize for General Skywalker's behavior." she said.

His face darkened, he grabbed the tennis ball from his desk, turned 90 degrees to his right and started throwing the ball. 'So, that's why she's here.' he thought. "How much do you know about the incident?" he asked, still methodically throwing the ball against the wall. "He was angry that you could kill Asajj Ventress when so many Jedi had fallen to her blades and made a grave error and insulted

your wife after she had been killed by Ventress. After he was judged he attempted to assassinate you and was grievously wounded." she said, though he could detect a slight hint of sadness as she was talking. Never once did he look at her as the images of those events played out again before his eyes. He caught the ball and rubbed his stump for a moment then resumed throwing the ball.

At that moment Alan came in with a silver platter with a steaming cup of hot coco sitting upon it. Marcus graciously accepted it and, blowing on it, carefully taking a sip. He set the mug down with a slight look of content and went back to his therapy. Padme was beginning to get annoyed, this Marcus almost acted like he was ignoring her and the incessant thumping of that ball was eating at her nerves. "Why would you come down here to talk to me when you could just solve this with the Admiral? Unless there was another reason you came down here." he said. She suddenly felt on guard, 'How much does he know?' she asked herself. He continued throwing the ball at the wall as she stewed. "Somehow, I get the feeling that you're here to beg for Skywalker's life." he said finally. Padme froze "Why would you think that?" she asked softly. He continued throwing the ball at the wall "As it stands, I am the aggrieved party. Not only has he attempted to assassinate me but he slanderously attacked my wife, God rest her soul, and after our duel was finished he attacked me again. If it wasn't for Ahsoka, we wouldn't be having this conversation and he would be facing a firing squad." he said calmly as he threw his ball.

Padme could only look at her hands in her lap. What he had said was exactly what Admiral Whitaker had said to her before she had gone down to see him. He looked at her, not even breaking his stride with the ball. He caught the ball and looked at her intensely "If I didn't know any better, I'd say you had feelings for him." he said softly. Padme froze, her eyes widened for a moment then returned to their normal size. Marcus leaned back into his chair "I'd almost go so far as to say you love him." he continued. Now her eyes visibly widened and she looked at him a look of fear on her face. He looked at her expression "Oh my god, you do love him, and judging from your reaction it's more than a crush." he looked at her closely as she absentmindedly fiddled with her right hand. "You're married to him. My god you're fucking married to him." he said, disbelief painted on his face as he leaned back in his chair. He grabbed his mug of hot coco and took a swig. It had cooled greatly from when Alan had brought it in though it wasn't exactly cold. He set the mug down, picked up the ball, turned back to the wall and began throwing it.

She was absolutely terrified at this point "Howâ€¦?" she began. "Lady, I've been married for 27 years, 51 if you count my time in cryo, you learn to recognize things. Like other couples, and with the Jedi order's stance on marriageâ€¦" he said trailing off. They sat for a moment the only sound the methodic bouncing of the ball. She couldn't take it anymore "Will you stop playing with your ball and face me!" she almost screamed. He caught the ball and faced her, hand raised exactly how he had caught it. "I'm sorry, but me 'playing with my ball' is actually a form of therapy for me. And after what I've seen and done, trust me sweetheart, I need the fucking therapy." he said venomously. He went back to his therapy, almost ignoring her as he thought of how he was going to deal with this. Padme slumped in defeat, never before had she ever found herself in a negotiation session where she couldn't win. She started to rise "I see I'm only

wasting your time I'llâ€¦" she began. "Sit." he said in a commanding tone, she did so.

He downed the last of his coco and returned to his therapy. "I don't want anyone to go through what I did. Skywalker won't die, you can be sure of that." he said. She slumped in relief, 'Anakin you owe me for this big time.' she thought. "Howeverâ€¦" she tensed "General Skywalker will not be allowed near any UNSC installation, ship, planet, or theater of operations. If there is going to be any sort of UNSC presence he will be on the other side of the galaxy." he stated. 'Basically, if he survived the Jedi Council, he was to be excluded from the vast majority of the war.' she thought. "I'll be relaying my **recommendation** to Admiral Whitaker. I'm sure he'll agree with it." he said. He caught the ball, stood, and walked around to her. She stood as well. He set the ball down and stuck out his hand "It was good to meet you, though I must say I don't think he deserves you but I digress. And don't worry, your secret will stay safe with me." he said. She took the proffered hand and shook it "You have no idea how liberating that is to hear you say that." she said and he could feel the relief and sincerity oozing off of her. He nodded and escorted her to the door.

After she left Alan reappeared and took the mug away "Anything else sir?" he asked. "No that'll be all Alan, thanks." Marcus replied. Alan bowed and left the room. Marcus went back to his desk and brought up his terminal. He spent the rest of the night, working on his proposal to the Admiral.

****Author's Note:** Not nearly as long of a wait for this chapter but still, damn near too long. So now we know how Padme responded to her husband's less than stellar performance, and she was not happy. So now I'm going to start working on chapter 3 of my Rosario-Halo story. And for the love of god, if any of you can come up with a better name than 'Silver Team' please give it to me, I'm begging you. Review as you see fit.**

10. Chapter 9

**** Author's Note:** MWAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA! I fucking lied, I am going to write on this one as well! Happy New Year! Let's get this party started MuthaFuckas. **

The next day, all the ships in the Goliath system turned and entered slipspace, except the Madrigal, she entered Hyperspace, their destination, Earth. Everyone on the Madrigal was eager to see the home world of these new humans. Marcus had spent the entire night wording his proposal to Admiral Whitaker about what to do with Anakin on the UNSC side. Whitaker hadn't liked it, but, he wasn't in a position to demand anything more.

Marcus was having one of his numerous therapy sessions with his music on a fairly high setting when the door chimed. He caught the ball and set it down on his desk. "Computer, pause music." he said. The computer made a noise and the music stopped. "Come in." he said. The door opened and in walked Alan. "Pardon the interruption sir, but the Admiral thought that it would be wise for you to go down to the armory and get yourself reacquainted with the new tech sir." he said. Marcus nodded, he had thought about going down and getting re-outfitted, but he just never got around to it. Granted he had only

been on the Mindour for three days and all of them had been chaotically filled.

"Alright Alan, I'll go down now." he said getting out of his seat. Alan bowed slightly and stepped out of the room. Marcus dressed himself in the standard issue T-shirt and pants of the UNSC, grabbed his old equipment, and left his room. He passed several people on his way to the armory. As he passed them, they would salute him but he was unable to salute them back, with his only arm carrying his old equipment. So he resorted to simply verbally acknowledging them.

After what seemed like hours, he finally made it to the armory. The Mindour was far larger than the Madrigal that was for sure. He stepped up to a grizzled looking marine though if he had to guess he was a New Gen, a term The Old Breed had come up with to differentiate the H-CW vets from the new guys. The marine was working with another marine, so he set his equipment down on the counter, rolling his shoulder from the effort of lugging it all the way down here without the benefit of switching arms.

"Hey, what's a guy gotta do to get some service down here eh?" he asked. "You wait your goddamned turn." the marine replied. Marcus counted down in his head 'Threeâ€|Twoâ€|Oneâ€|' the marine turned to see who it was and instantly paled. He spun around so fast Marcus almost thought he was going to get whiplash. He snapped a salute that would've made the harshest drill sergeant beam with pride. "Sir! Forgive me Sir! I didn't know it was you Sir!" he said in a loud voice. Marcus chuckled "At ease marine, I'm just giving you a hard time." he said. The marine dropped his salute. "What's your name marine?" Marcus asked. "Gunnery Sergeant Mathias." he replied. "Well Gunny, the Admiral in all his wisdom has decided that I need to get re-acquainted with the basics of being a ground-pounder." Marcus said.

The first thing that they went over was the new armor. To say that Marcus was impressed would be an understatement. He had fought in the first battles with the Covenant and it had been moral breaking when they discovered that the enemy had personal shields. Of course they eventually fought through that when they were able to kill them. When he discovered that the UNSC developed energy shielding for the regular trooper he was pleased. He was impressed with the armor itself as well. It was lighter than his old armor and with him being an ODS'T his armor variant received the active camo armor ability. The gunny helped him into his new armor, due to the fact he only had one arm, which was still the matte black that he was used to.

Next came the rifle. It was the same style as the one he saw the marines carrying back when he came aboard. Only this was smaller than that. "The armor you're wearing is the standard MK-II armor that the UNSC SpecOps wear. It's tougher than the standard armor the rest of us use." he said. He handed Marcus the helmet and Marcus put it on his head. His HUD came up and he was surprised to see the sergeant was showing up on his Motion Tracker as well as everyone in a 15 meter radius and they weren't moving. "That's new." he said. "You must be referring to the upgraded Motion Tracker, Sir." the gunny said. "Yeah, it's really nice, now I don't have to worry so much about trying to find stationary targets." Marcus said. "That's true, Sir." the gunny said. He picked up the old ODS'T helmet that Marcus had brought down with him. "To think, you actually fought a war with

this." he said softly.

Marcus turned to him and gave him a look that said 'Are you fucking serious?'. The gunny couldn't see his face, but he could tell by his body language what he was thinking. "I didn't mean it like that Sir!" he said quickly. Marcus sighed, that was the problem with these New-Gens. They couldn't wrap their heads around the fact that the Old Bread had gone into battle without all of their high-tech shit. "Whatever." he said. He pulled the helmet off of his head and magnetized it to his back. "So, what about those rifles?" Marcus asked. The gunny got over himself and set the helmet down.

He turned around and grabbed a rifle off of the shelf. When he turned back around Marcus was gone. He was confused for a moment then sighed. "It would seem you found the Active Camo, Sir." he said. Marcus touched the spot he had touched before and the effects faded away. "Is that standard issue?" he asked. "Only for SpecOps and ODSs, Sir." the gunny replied. He set the rifle down on the counter between them. "This is the M-90s Combat Rifle. The main difference between the M-90 and the M-90s is the M-90s is $\frac{3}{4}$ the size of the M-90 and is silenced. The M-90 series has three modes of fire, single, three-round burst, and full-auto. It is also able to fire several different types of ammo, ranging from Armor-Piercing to a Plasma Battery. Though the Plasma Battery can't be used too often, it tends to melt the barrel. Three-round burst and single shot are best used in conjunction with the Plasma Battery. Now the most unique feature on this rifle is here." he said, pressing a button on the side of the rifle.

The rifle broke down into a bunch of different parts though they stayed central to the grip. He pressed the button again and the rifle formed back in one piece. "The best part is that the pieces could be strung about and out of reach and still form back into the rifle." he continued. "You also have an underslung attachment for a grenade launcher or flamethrower. The grenade launcher can fire several types of grenades; High-Explosive, Anti-Personnel, and Armor-Piercing. On top of that you have a sixteen inch bayonet made out of Triple-A Titanium, which pops out of here." he said, as he slid a bolt and a bayonet slid out under the barrel.

Marcus picked it up, but he instantly knew he would never be able to use it with one arm. He magnetized the broken down rifle to his back. "I'm sure it's a very capable rifle, but I'm going to stick to my pistol until I get my other arm back." he said. The gunny nodded. "Just out of curiosity, what do you have for snipers?" he asked. The gunny grinned evilly, and turned back to the weapons rack. When he turned back the biggest rifle Marcus had ever seen was set on the counter. "This is the M-91 Rail Gun. Effective range of 3.5 klicks, single shot, able to punch through the armor of a wraith at 2.5 klicks, scope is a Type-9 x30 zoom. The only thing more deadly than this is the M-87 Portable Gauss Cannon or, as it's known to the troops, the Doom Whomper." he said. Marcus marveled at the rifle. If he had to, he'd say that someone gave the original sniper rifle a shit ton of steroids. And if it was as capable as the gunny said it was, in the hands of a highly trained sharpshooter, it was a force multiplier all on its own. "Strap it on." he said. The gunny did a double take "Excuse me Sir?" he asked. "I said strap it on, I'll go down to the machine shops and have them craft me a temporary arm and I'll get some shooting practice in before we get to Earth." he replied.

Marcus walked out of the armory decked out in his new armor with his new weapons on his back and carrying his old armor under his arm with his magnum magnetized to his hip. He was heading to the engineering spaces for several reasons. The first and most important was that he needed a temporary arm. The second was he wanted someone to fix up his old armor to its former glory. He eventually found where he was going and stepped inside. The machine shop on the Mindour was absolutely massive. If they had the parts and the time they could probably build their own frigate, or two, at once.

He walked up to the biggest guy he could find. "I need to find a good machinist." he said. "Oh really, I guess that explains why you're in the machine shop." the guy replied sarcastically turning so he could look Marcus in the face. He stopped and squinted "No, it can't be." he said. Marcus looked into the face of the man and froze. "Oh my fucking god." he said. "Little Marcus Mateo, I never thought I was going to see you again _amigo_." the man said enveloping Marcus in a massive bear hug.

Chief Sanchez held the crushing embrace for a second then released Marcus and gave him a once over. "Damn _amigo_, you look good for someone your age." he said. Marcus chuckled "Yeah, look at yourself, I can't believe they put someone like you in charge of a division." he retorted. "Well after you and the _amiga_ went missing I cleaned up my act in your memory. Speaking of the _amiga_, where is she?" he asked. Marcus's smile at finding his old friend and mechanic left his face in favor of a dark look. "She didn't make it." he said simply. Sanchez took a step back in shock. "Sit, I want to hear this story." he said.

After Marcus recounted his tale, Sanchez stood, grabbed a wrench and hurled it into a wall 20 meters away. "After everything you two survive, she gets cut down by a cowardly _puta_ that doesn't even give her the satisfaction of killing her face to face!" he yelled. He turned back to Marcus "At least you got the _puta_." he continued with a grim smile on his face. "That I did." Marcus confirmed. "Now, you didn't come all the way down here to remember bad memories. So what can I do for you?" Sanchez asked. Marcus looked sheepishly at Sanchez. "I need a new arm." he said gesturing at his left shoulder. "I was also wondering if you could repair and refurbish my old armor." he continued.

Sanchez grabbed Marcus's old armor and looked it over. "You've been getting in fights again." he stated. Marcus feigned innocence "Oh really?" he asked. "There are new burn marks and holes in your armor. So yes, you've been getting into fights." Sanchez said. Marcus rubbed the back of his neck "Yeah I guess I have." he said sheepishly. Sanchez rolled his eyes "Alright, I'll fix the armor, same specifics for the arm?" he asked. "Yeah, also add a wrist blade as well, for a more silent approach." Marcus replied evily. "Alright, I'll call you down when it's ready." Sanchez said. "Thanks Sanchez, I owe you one." Marcus said standing. Sanchez waved his arm in a dismissive manner. "Don't worry about it, consider it my way to repay her for everything she did for the UNSC." he said. Marcus nodded understandingly and left.

Marcus had met Sanchez the day after he lost his arm in the battle where he met the Chief. He was just a Petty Officer Third Class back then but he knew his trade. He had made the original arm to replace

his lost one and after that he had never gone to any other mechanic for upgrades and repairs. They had become friends and Tailia had taken a liking to him when he delivered him to her with both arms. When Marcus and Tailia had gotten married, Marcus's best man had been Sanchez. After that day the three of them were almost inseparable. Tailia would make sure they stayed in one piece, Marcus made sure they stayed alive, and Sanchez would replace and repair Marcus's arm.

He was halfway to his office and back to his therapy when he ran into Ahsoka. He grinned evilly. He hid behind a wall and put his helmet on his head. He activated the active camo and slowly made his way to the unawares Jedi. Ahsoka suddenly got the feeling that she was being watched and scanned her surroundings. She was about to send out her feelings to try and find who was watching her when she felt something cold touch her neck. "Dead." someone said. She felt the cold metal of the knife be removed from her neck and she spun around. She looked into the helmet of the person then noticed his lack of a left arm.

Marcus removed his helmet to a stunned Ahsoka. "You need to be more aware of your surroundings." he said with a smile on his face. "How were able to sneak up on me?" she asked. "That's for me to know and you to probably never find out." he replied. Ahsoka shook her head "I was actually looking for you." she said. Marcus raised an eyebrow "Oh really, whatever for?" he asked. Ahsoka looked around nervously "Can we go somewhere more private?" she asked.

Now Marcus was intrigued "My office is just a little bit farther down this way." he said taking a step forward. A short time later they arrived at Marcus's office. Marcus and Ahsoka entered and he offered her a seat as he took his. He grabbed his ball and started throwing it at the wall "So what's on your mind?" he asked. Ahsoka fidgeted "It's about the Council." she answered. Marcus grabbed the ball and turned to her "What about the Council?" he asked. Ahsoka took a deep breath "They have appointed me to be their personal liaison to you." she said looking away. Marcus fell back in his chair in shock. "Why me? I'm just a common foot soldier." he asked. "The Council believes that you will soon become a man of great importance. Plus they think that it would be easier for me to be a liaison to you than someone else because of our relationship." she replied not meeting his eyes.

That's when it hit him; it wasn't that she didn't want to do it. It was because she was paired with him. And with her developing feelings for him things were likely to get very interesting, very soon. He leaned back in his chair "So, the Council thinks that I'm going to become someone of importance soon do they?" he asked. She nodded still not meeting his gaze. "So why all the secrecy, was I not supposed to know? Or is there another reason?" he asked. She finally looked him in the eye. "I don't think I'm going to be able to do it." she said softly. "So that's it." he said. Then he started laughing.

Ahsoka looked at him in confusion "I know the real reason you don't want to do this." he said. She froze, was he talking about that? How did he find out? Does he know? All of these questions flew through her brain. Marcus stood and walked over to the viewport. "To be honest I'm flattered, to have a Jedi start to fall for me." he said. Ahsoka fell out of her chair. "How?" she asked. "I may look young

but I've got the experience to tell when something like that is going on." he responded. "It's the subtle things, the stolen glances, the shifts in body language when you're near them, the self-conscious feelings when they look at you." he turned to her "The blush when you look at them." he said.

She felt her cheeks heat up. Then she tried to compose herself "That is the exact reason why I can't be your liaison." she said. "Ah but that's the real kicker isn't it? You try to run from your feelings. You run as far as you can, but even if you manage to out run them, there's this little voice in the back of your head. Always berating you, always saying 'What ifâ€¦'. The regret and hate for yourself is enough to drive anyone insane." he said.

He stepped over to her "Listen closely Ahsoka, I'm not looking for that right now, maybe in time, but not now. Tailia still needs her funeral, plus we have a possible war on our hands. If you still harbor feelings for me afterâ€¦ well, we'll cross that bridge when we get to it." he said. "Besides, if you declined their 'offer' they would want to know why, and even if you could lie convincingly enough, the truth would eventually come out. My suggestion, is to just go with the flow for now. If they deem fit to transfer you then you get transferred." he said sitting in his chair.

Ahsoka was shocked beyond belief. Not only had he discovered her feelings for him, but he had completely destroyed her attempts to get away from him, and with logical reasoning to boot. "How many others know about this?" she asked after a time sitting back in her chair. "Only the members of Ghost Team and only after they met you. I knew after I woke in the med-bay the second time." he replied. Ahsoka let out a long sigh "It seems I'm not going to get out of this." she said. "Unfortunately, no." Marcus agreed. "So since I'm going to be your liaison, what happens next?" she asked. Marcus grinned.

****Author's Note: Sup my muthafuckas. It has been some time since I last updated and I deeply apologize for that. I lost a little focus after I started my Rosario-Halo, but it is back. You may now commence celebrations. Expect more updates in the future. On a side note I have joined the U.S. Navy and will be leaving for Boot Camp on June 11****th**** and will be gone for 8 weeks, so don't expect anything from me until around the beginning of August. I'll let you guys know more when I know more. Review as you see fit. ****

11. Chapter 10

**** Author's Note: Sup my bisnatchs. I've updated my other stories so show your love and appreciation. Without further ado The Rising Storm. ****

Ahsoka shifted uncomfortably in her chair. She didn't like the way he was grinning. "First off we have to get you out of those robes." he said. Ahsoka instantly blushed furiously "WHÂ€¦WHAT?!" she cried. "I'm not going into any combat situations with you wearing nothing to stop the enemies' rounds but those robes." he explained. "I have my lightsaber." she retorted still blushing profusely. "True, but you won't be able to deflect the enemies' rounds indefinitely, and I don't want you to get killed by a stray shot. Too much damn paperwork, then we have to find another liaison." he pointed out.

Marcus then turned to his console and began to type rapidly on it.

For a short time Ahsoka just sat on her chair, still blushing like mad as Marcus worked furiously on his computer. "Annnnd, done." he said as he hit one final key and leaned back in his chair. "What's done?" Ahsoka asked. "Your new combat uniform." he replied. A look of confusion joined her blush which was unnoticeably receding. She said the only intelligent thing she could "Huh?". "While normally you would be considered a spy and killed if you wore one of our uniforms, I've tweaked this one so that it isn't exactly one of ours." he explained. Ahsoka nodded her head in understanding.

Marcus turned from his console, looked at her and noted that she was still blushing about his comment. He smiled inwardly 'I was the same way with Her in the beginning as well.' he thought sadly, though he didn't let it show on his face. "Go down to the armory and tell the man there that Colonel Mateo sent you. He'll know what to do." he said. She nodded awkwardly and left his room/office.

Marcus watched her leave, and then when the door closed he let out a bark of laughter. "My god is she easy to goad." he said as he leaned back in his chair. He couldn't stop the grin that appeared on his face after his outburst. Then it turned into a sad smile as he remembered the other girl he had teased in such a way. 'Of course, then I was a much younger man.' he thought sadly. Pulling his mind out of that abyss, he turned back to his console and began the first draft of a letter to some very important people.

Ahsoka moved through the large ship as she made her way to the armory. She couldn't help but be impressed by the size of the ship. It certainly was larger than anything the Republic could field, even some of those newer ships that the eggheads were cooking up. She passed some of the crew as she walked and couldn't help but note their looks of distrust and some of them even had hate in their eyes. 'Is it because I'm not human?' she asked herself. Ahsoka resolved to ask Marcus when she returned to his room/office, and continued to the armory.

She eventually arrived and searched out the man she was supposed to talk too. Ahsoka eventually found someone who had the strips of a Gunnery Sergeant on his uniform and walked towards him. "Excuse me." she said. "I was told to come down here?" she posed the statement as a question. The Gunnery Sergeant turned to look at her "Yeah, the Colonel had me modify a suit of ODST Armor for you." he said as he turned back and grabbed a bundle off of a rack. He turned back to her and handed it to her. She took the bundle "Umm?" she looked at him in confusion. "Well don't just stand there, put it on." he said in an exasperated tone. "What's here?!" she asked incredulously.

He gave her a look that screamed he didn't want to deal with this right now. "Are you serious? If you're so self-conscious, I'm sure there's a spot where no one will see you." he said with an irritated tone. Ahsoka nodded and left with the bundle of clothes and armor and went to her room. She striped out of her robes and pulled on the body suit, then began to attach the armor plates to the areas where they go.

It took a few tries but, eventually, she managed to get all the right plates in the right spots. She pulled out the mirror that was in her

room and looked herself over. It was different from the standard armor for the ODSIs. While the new armor was slimmed down from the H-CW era armor it was still bulky in places, Ahsoka's armor was even slimmer. She did a few range of motion tests and found that she had a full range of motion. Ahsoka was surprised, she had expected to find her range of motion compromised by the armor; instead she found she was lighter on her feet than she normally was.

The coloration was also different. Instead of the matte-black of the ODSIs, the armor was a silvery color. It didn't shine, but even so, it had its own quality to it. She also noticed that instead of the Eagle of the UNSC was the crest of the Jedi Order. Ahsoka noted the lack of a helmet but shrugged it off. 'There helmets would never work on me anyway.' she thought. She left her room and made her way back to Marcus's office/room.

As she walked she was on the receiving end of more ugly glares. None of them said anything; they just looked away from her when she tried to meet their eyes. This rattled her more than anything else ever had. Never before in her life had she ever felt like she was utterly unwanted, and hated. She quickened her pace until she was in a dead sprint straight to Marcus's door.

The door opened as she approached and she bolted in. Marcus looked up from his letter and noted the disturbed expression on her face. She had her hands on his desk and was panting like she had run quite a distance. He slowly stood and started rubbing her back to help loosen up her muscles and allow her to breathe easier. "Why does the crew hate me so much?" she asked after catching her breath. "I see." he said after a moment of consideration. He slowly made his way to his chair and sat down in it. "They hate youâ€¦ because they believe the Republic is to blame for Tailia's death." he said bluntly.

Ahsoka slumped down in her chair and put her head in her hands. "Howâ€¦ how can they think that?" she asked, her words muffled by her hands. Marcus hung his head "It's the way their wired." he replied. He sucked in a deep breath then slowly let it out. "They most likely believe that it was the duty of the Republic to protect her, and they failed. Of course her being a war-hero has nothing to do with it. Believe me the public outcry is going to be massive. The only variable is going to be who they turn their anger on; the Republic or the Separatists." he explained. "Nowâ€¦" he said clapping his hands together. "Let's see how you look." he continued.

Ahsoka let the words sink in, and then stood. Marcus stood as well and looked her over. He slowly walked around her, looking her up and down. "How does it fit?" he asked. "Almost like a glove." she replied. "Good, I was worried it was either going to be too big or too small. How's your range of motion?" he asked next. "Perfect, I was honestly expecting to lose some of it with the armor. I wasn't expecting it to allow me perfect motion." she answered. Marcus nodded and looked her over again, then grunted his approval.

He turned back to his desk and sat down, as he motioned for her to do the same. She did as she was bidden and sat down. "Now there's only one more thing for you. I want you to go down to the shooting range and learn how to use a rifle." he said. "I'm not a fan of rifles." she said sternly. "You're going to be on my team, and I don't need you getting in the way, swinging your blade around." he retorted. Ahsoka stared defiantly at him for a moment, and then sighed. "Fine."

she said. "Good, I want you to spend as much time as possible down there. Don't leave there until you can field strip a M-90s, clean it and then put it back together in under two minutes." he said. She nodded "You're dismissed." Marcus said as he turned back to his computer. Ahsoka stood and turned to leave when she was stopped at the door.

"Oh, one more thing Ms. Tano." Marcus said standing. She turned to look at him as he approached her with what looked like a "BRAND?! He turned at the last moment, and opened a port on his wall. Marcus stuck the brand in the port for a few seconds then pulled it out when it was red hot. He looked at her with an evil smirk on his face as he approached. Ahsoka backed up against the wall and tried to remain calm. "What are you going to do with that?!" she asked trying to keep her voice even but it cracked at the end. Marcus looked between her and the brand. "Didn't you notice the marks on our armor?" he asked innocently.

Now that Ahsoka looked back on it, she did notice the strange marks on Chief and the Arbiter's armor. Cortana wasn't wearing any armor and neither was Six, so she didn't know if they had the same mark. "When me and Chief formed Ghost Team, we took up this symbol. It showed our bond as comrades-in-arms and brothers and sisters in all but blood." Marcus explained. "Normally, I would wait to bestow this honor on a prospective Teammate, until I could test them myself. But because of the circumstances, we'll have to forgo that part for the moment but don't worry, I will end up testing you." he continued.

Ahsoka considered it for a moment then consented. She mentally prepared herself and used the Force to deaden the nerves around her body, so that she wouldn't feel any pain from the residual heat. Marcus took the brand and aimed for a spot on her chest. He quickly shoved it into her chest and he heard her gasp as the air was knocked out of her from the strike and the effort to contain the pain. "Just a few more seconds" Marcus muttered.

Ahsoka was in agony, there were no other words to describe the way she was feeling. Even with the Force deadening her nerves, she could still feel the heat and the force of the hit had caught her off guard. After what felt like an eternity, the pressure on her chest was removed. She could feel the heat recede, and then the cooling effects of the Force as it removed the last vestiges of the heat. Ahsoka's legs gave out from under her and she started to fall forward but Marcus dropped the brand and caught her with his one arm. "Sorry should have warned you, the branding takes a lot some people." he said softly.

Ahsoka was breathing heavily as she leaned up against Marcus's body. The ordeal had left her drained, more so than any other time in her life up to that point. All she wanted to do was pass out and forget about the day; which she promptly did anyway.

Marcus felt her go limp in his arms and he let out a sigh, then a snort. 'I didn't even actually brand her, just her armor, and yet she still passes out.' he thought. He shook his head in amusement and carried her limp form into the sleeping section of the room and laid her down on his bed. He returned to the office portion of the room and grabbed the brand. Marcus stashed it and sat back down at his desk to finish his proposal.

The next day, Ahsoka woke in a room much like hers yet not. While her room was Spartan, this one had some decoration. Framed posters of, what she can only assume, bands hang on the walls. Some other small trinkets and knickknacks dotted the room here and there. She sat up and swung her feet off of the bed and let them fall to the floor. A dull throbbing in her chest reminded her as to why she had passed out. She felt where the brand had marked her armor and noticed that it was no longer hot to the touch.

Ahsoka slowly stood, testing her footing to ensure that she wouldn't fall. Once she was confident enough in herself she took a tentative step forward. She was pleased when she didn't fall and decided that she needed to see what the brand actually was. Stepping into what she thought was the refresher; she looked in the mirror at the brand. A broadsword pointing down flanked by small wings met her eyes. Glad to finally know what adorned her armor she left the refresher and exited the room.

Marcus was already up and reviewing his proposal when Ahsoka stepped into the office portion. He looked up as she entered "You're awake, how do you feel?" he asked. "Besides the throbbing in my chest where you hit me, not too bad." she answered. "Good, I was worried there for a moment." he said standing. Ahsoka then noticed that on the left side of his chest where there was previously clean armor was the same mark her armor now carried. She was now part of a team, and not just any team, the most recognizable team in the entire UNSC. The implications of that almost made her have a headache.

"I still what you to learn how to use a rifle, so head on down now." Marcus said. Ahsoka nodded and left his office/room. When she did Marcus looked over his proposal once more then saved it to a datapad. Leaning back in his chair, Marcus rubbed his temples. He hated being inactive. When he was inactive, it allowed his mind to wonder, and with him, that was never good thing. He suddenly stopped when a massive revelation hit him. 'I'm all alone.' he realized.

When Marcus had first come to this time he at least had someone he could relate to. Someone who understood the jokes he made, who liked the same style-ish of music as he did. Someone who helped keep him sane, now she was gone. He was utterly alone in this world. He had spent a good amount of time in this world, so he knew he could survive. But, he couldn't shake the feeling that no one would ever be able to truly understand him anymore—wait that wasn't quite true, there was always his mother.

She wasn't actually his mother; his biological mother was still safe in the twenty-first century. After Marcus and Talia had shown up, they were wrecks. Scared, confused, and out of their depth, they simply shut down for a time. Only one person was able to pull them out of their depression. Dr. Catharine Elizabeth Halsey pulled them out of their self induced 'coma's' and became what the two desperately needed, an anchor. From that day forward they called her mother in recognition for what she did and as a matter of principal.

Dr. Halsey wasn't quite the best when it came to heart-to-heart talks but other than that she was their closest thing to a mother they had in this fucked up world. Marcus knew that he could talk to her and that he needed to talk to her. He needed to get to her before the

death of her adoptive daughter reached her from an outside source. But for the life of him he couldn't remember if he had seen her anywhere on the ship. He would have figured she would have been the first to welcome her adoptive son and daughter home.

Marcus pushed those thoughts to the back of his mind for the time being and focused on the matter at hand.

He couldn't do much without his left arm and it would take some more time for Chief Sanchez to finish machining it. His stomach yelled loudly that it wanted fed, so he stood and made his way to the Mess Hall for some breakfast. After a short time he arrived at the Mess Hall. As soon as the door slid open and he stepped through a call of 'Officer on Deck!' was heard throughout the deck. The entire room was dead silent. Marcus surveyed the assembled troops, panning his head slowly to the left then to the right. "As you were." he said. The men returned to their seats and their meals as Marcus made his way to the food line.

He made up a plate of bacon, eggs, sausage, and pancakes found an empty table and sat down. As he began to eat he heard three sets of footsteps come up behind him. "Do you know whose seat this is?" one of them asked. The voices in the Mess Hall dropped to murmuring as everyone turned to look in his direction. "Who wants to know?" Marcus asked. "I'm Spartan Chris, and I want to know." said the same voice. Marcus turned his head just enough to get a look at the three of them, and was unimpressed.

They were all wearing a jumpsuit with hardpoints where armor could be attached and digi-camo pants. They all had the height of a Spartan but he knew from personal experience what real Spartans were and these three weren't it. Real Spartans never engaged in conversation with anyone else but other Spartans and they never acted like bullies. He quickly observed and appraised the situation. He was crippled without his left arm and he was out numbered.

Marcus knew a confrontation was unavoidable but he was going to make a good showing of himself. He ignored the three fake Spartans and took a drink from his cup of juice. "Hey I'm talking to you." Chris said as he reached out his hand to grab Marcus's shoulder. Marcus was faster. He splashed the juice into Chris's face then brought his elbow into his stomach. He jumped out of his seat then slammed his fist into FS-1's face. Marcus dropped when FS-2 aimed a punch for his head then brought his fist into the man's solar plexus. Then spun around and landing a roundhouse kick into FS-3's face.

With the battle now joined FS-1 slammed a fist into the man before him and he flew into a wall. Marcus picked himself up and then dropped to avoid the kick that was aimed at him. As he stood he brought his knee up and slammed it into the other man's jewels. It threw the man off, but it didn't drop him but when he brought his elbow down on the back of the man's head he dropped to the ground. FS-2 then landed a kick into Marcus's stomach and he flew back into the wall and he slumped to the ground.

The entire room was deathly silent. Chris was standing with FS-2 while FS-3 was moaning on the ground. "You son-of-a-bitch!" he yelled as he cocked his hand back to deliver the killing blow. _Snap-hiss_. Chris was clutching the stump of his arm and screamed in pain as he looked down in shock. The man was holding an energy sword in his only

hand and Chris's forearm sat on the ground between them. FS-3 had had enough, this guy wasn't even a Spartan, and yet he was able to drop one, and cripple another. He brought his leg back and shoved it forward to slam into the man's body.

Marcus was finished and he knew it. He had made a good showing of himself against the Fake Spartans but in the end his missing arm and the three to one odds had done him in. But before the leg could hit him, a green blur slammed into the Fake Spartan and threw him across the room. Standing where the Fake Spartan had previously stood the Master Chief.

He looked down at his CO and grimaced, but felt a sense of pride slowly swell inside him. His constant sparring with Marcus had really paid off. Marcus was able to drop one of the new Spartan-IV's and cripple another before he was brought down. Admittedly he had crippled the one in an act of desperation, but it still happened. Chief looked back at the other Spartan as he got up off the ground. "Stay down, boy." he said in a monotone. The other Spartan disregarded that and stood in a fighting stance as Marcus pulled himself up using Chief as leverage.

"I told you, when fighting Spartans; you need to aim for the pressure points and weak points in the armor." he said as if he were reprimanding a student. Marcus chuckled but it turned into a coughing fit. "I probably would've won if I had both arms." he said after recomposing himself. Chief nodded and prepared for the other Spartan to come and attack then when a female voice called out. "Stand down!" the voice called.

****Author's Note:** So now we have another chapter and we finally meet the Spartan-IVs. To be perfectly honest I don't really like the Spartan-IV's. They may wear the MJOLNIR GEN-II armor and they may have augmentations but they just don't feel like Spartans to me. This was really driven home to me in the first episode of Spartan-Ops when Majestic was bantering. The Spartan-IIs on the other hand are true Spartans. So if you're a fan of the Spartan-IVs don't expect much from them in this fic. Anyway, Review as you see fit. ******

12. Chapter 11

**** Author's Note:** So I finally got my third chapter up for The Great Journey after forever. So hopefully I'll be able to get this out faster than that. Happy reading!******

After hearing the voice call out for them to stand down, Marcus almost sagged in relief but managed to stay standing with the help of Chief, and still kept his guard up. A woman came into his vision wearing the same jumpsuit and pants as the others in front of him. She had brown hair and a fair complexion with blue eyes. Though her body looked young, the eyes gave her away. They gave away the age that she was, if Marcus had to guess, he'd put her somewhere around mid-to-early forties. She was shorter than him by a few inches but he could see the muscle flexing under the jumpsuit. The muscle wasn't big and bulgy like those people who thrive on living in the gym; they were more attuned to a swimmer.

She looked between Chief and Marcus and the three Fake Spartans, then turned her attention to the two on her left. "I thought I made it

clear that you weren't supposed to be fighting my Spartans, Chief." she said in a tone that didn't quite sit well with Marcus. "That's fine, because he wasn't the one who kicked their collective asses. I was." he said. The woman shifted her gaze from Chief to Marcus and she looked like she was sizing him up. "I find it hard to believe that three of my Spartans were bested by a mere _soldier_. Who are you anyway, I need to report this incident." she said with a sneer as she said soldier.

The temperature in the room seemed to drop a few degrees after her comment. "Isn't it a curtesy to give one's name first before asking for another's?" he asked, his voice icy. A brief flash of annoyance crossed her face before she let out an exasperated sigh. "Fine, I'm Commander Sarah Palmer, commanding officer of the Spartan Contingent aboard the *Mindour*, and commanding officer of all Spartans, with the exception of the Master Chief." she said though Marcus caught a hint of annoyance at the last part, which left him slightly amused.

He gently pushed himself off of Chief and stood shakily for a moment before finding his balance. "I'm Colonel Marcus Mateo, commanding officer of the 622nd ODST battalion attached to the UNSC Forward Unto Dawn, Team leader of the Ghosts, and Honorary Spartan-0138." he said, "And adoptive son of Dr. Catharine Elizabeth Halsey." he then added as an afterthought. As he had started speaking she had gone from a fairly tanned skin tone to paler as he continued, then absolutely all color drained from her face when he dropped the final bombshell.

He then turned to Chief "I didn't know a person's face could drain of color that fast." he said. Turning back to Sarah "And for your information it was the _soldiers_ who did 95% of the fighting and the dying in the H-CW, so I'd be careful of what you say around the older gentlemen aboard. I'm pretty sure I recognized a few of them from my time on the front lines, while you don't look older than at most forty. Which means that while you were still in dippers, good men and women were fighting and dying to keep ungrateful bastards like you alive so that you could be here today." he said, the temperature continuously dropping as he spoke.

He turned away from her and started walking away, the Chief by his side. As they walked, the ship's company that was in the mess hall parted as they passed. Eventually they made it to the entrance of the mess hall and they exited it. As soon as the door closed Marcus collapsed against the Chief. "If you would be so kind as to help me down to sick bay, I would be most grateful." he said. Chief nodded and helped Marcus go from the mess hall to the sick bay, some decks away.

After a time they eventually arrived at the sick bay and the two of them entered. The doctor on duty looked up and, noticing Marcus's condition sent two orderlies up to relieve Chief of him. As they set him down on a bed, he turned his attention to Chief. "I'll be fine now, thanks for the help." he said. Chief nodded, turned and left. Marcus then let himself enter the realm of unconsciousness after the thrashing he had been on the receiving end of.

Word spread fast of the altercation between the Spartan-IVs and Colonel Mateo. Many of the crew no longer looked up at them anymore. They were no longer looked at as heroes; they were now looked at as, at best bullies, and at worst incompetent fools. If three Spartan-IVs

could be mostly taken down by one man and a non-Spartan to boot, then what did that say about the new Spartan program.

Of course the greatest impact came from the ODS'Ts. After Chief had killed four of them directly after receiving his augmentations there had been a fierce rivalry between the ODS'Ts and the Spartans. With the defeat of the three Spartan-IVs, the ODS'Ts felt that justice had been served. They would never forgive or forget what the IVs had done to one of their own, and so was born another animosity between the ranks. Though it was only contained to the IVs and the ODS'Ts. It also should be noted that when Chief stepped in to save Marcus, the respect for him from the ODS'Ts had risen to new heights. They would never fully forgive him for what he did when he was fourteen, but now they would respect him.

Marcus slowly woke to the almost rhythmic sound of a heart monitor, the pure white ceiling, the smells of antiseptic, and the stiffness of hospital bed sheets. He breathed deeply then let out a sigh. He had lost count of how many times he had woken up in the same place during his thirty years of service. Slowly propping himself up on his one good arm he noticed a figure sitting on a chair next to his bed. With the orange skin, and alternating white and blue 'horns' it wasn't hard to figure out who it was. He could tell that she was asleep by the way her chest rose and fell in a strict pattern.

Marcus kicked off the sheets and slowly swung his legs off of the bed. Softly setting his bare feet set on the deck, they recoil slightly at the coldness of it. Disregarding the chill of the deck, he slowly begins to lift himself off of the bed. He stands next to his bed for a few moments to ensure his balance before he takes his first step. As he slowly gains confidence in his legs with each step he takes towards his clothes, his pace quickens from cautious to his standard walking speed.

He pulls the hospital gown off of himself, and starts to dress in his shipboard clothes which include the ODS'T T-shirt, black cargo pants, and his armor's boots. Just as he's trying to tie his boots, Ahsoka wakes and notices the empty bed. She starts to freak out and whips her head around frantically to lay her eyes on Marcus trying to tie his boots. She watches him struggle for a moment, then takes pity on him and waves her hand.

Just as Marcus is about to get his boot laces into position to be tied, they tie themselves. He stares at them for a moment, and then looks up at the only other occupant. She looked back at him from where she sat her hand still slightly outstretched. His expression darkened because she helped him but he blew his anger out with a breath. "I'm grateful for what you did. But next time, let me tie my own shoes, I've done it before." he said, as he looked into her eyes. Ahsoka looked into his eyes for a moment then nodded.

He nodded back and stood. "Now let's get out of here beforeâ€¦" he didn't get to finish before the unmistakable sounds of clearing their throats met their ears. Marcus visibly slumped and slowly turned to look at the medical personnel on duty that particular moment. As soon as he saw who it was, let out a strangled cry and promptly moved to the nearest bulkhead. He proceeded to draw a circle with his fingers and promptly began banging his head against it.

As Marcus continued to try and give himself brain damage Ahsoka took the opportunity to get a look at the person. She was an older woman, probably in her late sixties with an expression that could curdle milk. She was of medium build and height with light brown hair with some specks of grey hidden throughout it.

Her arms were crossed and she was tapping her foot with a grimace on her face as Marcus continued to bash his head in. "You knowâ€¦" she finally spoke. "I should say that I'm surprised to see you up and about this soon after you got the shit beat out of you. But, we've been going through this same routine ever since you were brought into my hospital tent by the Green Giant." she said. Marcus stopped beating his head against the wall and looked at her. "As much as it actually pains me to say thisâ€¦" he started then broke out in a happy grin. "I'm glad you made it through the war." he finished.

Her stern visage melted away and in its place a face of adoration was quickly formed. "It's good to see you again kid." she said as she walked over and gave him a hug, which he awkwardly returned with his one arm. "You too old lady." Marcus replied cheekily she sighed and wacked him upside his head as she pulled away "Cheeky brat." she said with a smile.

There was a slight cough behind them and Marcus turned and spied Ahsoka standing slightly uncomfortably by his previously filled bed. "Ah, right, Ahsoka Tano meet the resident psycho doctor lady, Dr. Samantha Kennesaw. Dr. Kennesaw, Jedi Padawan Ahsoka Tano." he said stepping back out of Dr. Kennesaw's way so she could get a good look at Ahsoka.

Ahsoka shifted uneasily under Dr. Kennesaw's gaze as it passed over her. Marcus stood off to one side as Kennesaw did her customary look over for all the new recruits. After a moment she spoke again, never taking her eyes off of Ahsoka. "Not even back a full week and already picking up the local girls?" she asked with a humor lacing her words. "HA! You know it, I didn't even have to do anything other than show my face and blast the fuck out a shit." he replied, damn near breaking out into peals of laughter. She turned to look at him, raising an eyebrow as she did so. "With a face like that? I'm surprised anyone would want that." she said with a smile.

The happiness Marcus had died a fiery death with her latest sentence. He knew she meant it as a joke, but it brought up memories of his now deceased wife and he couldn't help but feel like Kennesaw was insulting her memory. The life in his eyes died and his voice took on a dead quality as he spoke again.

"Yeah, kinda makes you wonder doesn't it?" he asked. Marcus turned and left through the sickbays hatch and left the two women in awkward silence. The smile on Kennesaw's face instantly fell as she replayed the last two sentences in her mind. "Me and my big mouth." she said as a frown appeared on her face. Kennesaw turned back and started to walk back into the depths of the sickbay when she was halted by a voice.

"Excuse me." she heard. Kennesaw looked behind her and her eyes landed on the young girl. "Could you please explain what just happened?" she asked. "He's obviously still hurting from her death." Kennesaw replied simply, she didn't need to explain who '**she**' was. Now Ahsoka was confused "But he seemed to come to terms with it

quickly enough." she said. "That was most likely a ruse." the elder woman said. "He may seem like he's fine and dandy, but in reality, he is a broken wreck. Then again, it doesn't help when you bring up old memories that used to bring joy, that now only bring pain." she continued.

Ahsoka could only nod her head at the older woman. "How did you meet him?" she asked. Kennesaw debated with herself on whether she should spill that story to this girl or not. She finally decided that she would and motioned for Ahsoka to follow her into her office. Kennesaw sat behind her desk and motioned for Ahsoka to sit in one of the chairs opposites of her.

She pulled out two cups and a bottle of single malt whisky. Kennesaw poured an amount in both cups and set one in front of Ahsoka. "I don't drink." she said. Kennesaw snorted "That's what they all say." she said. Kennesaw threw back her entire drink and leaned back in her chair. "So how I met Marcus? Well I guess it starts about 50 years ago or so. When they first showed up they were just a pair of scared and confused teens out of there element. Eventually someone pulled them back and they both decided to join the military. Marcus went Marines and Tailia went corpsmen. I was tasked with turning her from a civilian into a combat medic worthy of the Navy Corpsmen title."

She poured herself another drink and threw that one back as well. "From their stories they were just out of high school or just finishing so it really didn't take that long to get them accustomed to life here and in the military. They spent their time in boot then left for their respective "A" schools. Then came Harvest." she said as she lowered her head. She took a deep breath as she returned her gaze to Ahsoka. "That was first contact for us, the year 2525 on the planet Harvest. In a word it was a massacre. The Brutes aboard the ship that showed up thought that we were holding Forerunner artifacts and they wanted them. What they didn't know was that the "Artifacts" were humans themselves. Thus, the first "Battle" of the Human-Covenant War began."

She snorted as she poured another drink and threw it back. She leaned back in her chair and looked at Ahsoka. "Tell me, what constitutes a battle to you?" she asked. Ahsoka was startled by the question but thought on it anyway. "Well a battle is where two groups of combatants fight each other for land, money, power etc." she said. Kennesaw, lowered her head "Exactly, two groups of combatants. The Brutes attacked everything that moved, civilians, military, everything. It didn't matter to them, they just killed and killed. The meager military force on Harvest fought as hard as they could and they did manage to evacuate a good portion of the civilian population, at their location. The rest of the planet didn't fare so well." Her eyes clouded over as she finished speaking.

She looked back at Ahsoka, and Ahsoka had to suppress a shudder from the intensity of Kennesaw's gaze. "Marcus and Tailia were both on the planet for a 'Training Exercise' when battle was joined with the Brutes." she said. Her eyes gain a distant look to them as she replays the memory. "They were part of the first group to respond to the Covenant attack. Watching the holo-vids of their first engagements? it's unreal. They fought so well together, the perfect duo, perfectly complementing each other's strengths and canceling out their weaknesses." she continued. She poured herself another drink,

and downed it just as the previous two.

"Well I won't bore you with a play-by-play of the battle but suffice it to say Marcus and Tailia both ended up in my med station. Tailia treating Marcus's injuries as best she could. Naturally I took over for her when she couldn't do any more." Kennesaw looked into her drink for a short time. "After that it was almost a ritual to see Marcus in my med-bay being treated by Tailia and her calling him a dumbass for getting so hurt. It was funny in a way; he would always promise that it wouldn't happen again, the next engagement would roll around and he would be back in the same spot." she chuckles lightly. "That's how the next thirty years played out. The only major difference being when Marcus lost his arm." she finished.

Ahsoka could only look at her with wide eyes. It seemed the more people she met the more of Marcus's story she unraveled. "Thank you for your time, but I think I'll be going now." she said, standing. "Well, alright then. Keep your chin up kid, you'll do alright." Kennesaw said as she turned away. Ahsoka turned and walked out of the med-bay with no idea as to the location of Marcus. She decided that she would find him when she needed to and left for her room.

Marcus was in the engineering spaces with Chief Sanchez, going over his new arm. "So, I added the wrist blade like you wanted. The arm itself is going to feel lighter because of the new materials that I can work with. But even though it'll be lighter it'll be at least three to four times stronger." he explained. Marcus nodded his head as he looked over the arm. It was sleeker and more streamlined than his previous arm, which was just fine by him. "Alright, let's get the hard part over with." he said. Sanchez only nodded, grabbed the arm and approached Marcus. He lined the arm up with the receiver and looked back at Marcus. "On the count of three." he said. Marcus nodded his head and braced himself. "Three." Sanchez said as he shoved the arm into the receiver.

Marcus cried out in pain and glared at Sanchez, who wasn't fazed by his gaze and set about securing the arm in place. After a few moments he sat back and looked at his handy work. "Move your arm around." he commanded. Marcus complied and went through an entire range of motion test. Satisfied with the results Sanchez stood. "Good now you remember how to extend the forearm blade so I won't bother with that, the wrist blade on the other hand. All you have to do is throw your wrist back, like so." he demonstrated then looked at Marcus expectantly. Marcus repeated the gesture and the 8 inch blade flew into position with a '_shink_'.

Marcus examined the blade, "As strong as the Forearm blade, but thinner, easier to slip it through ribs and armor plates." Sanchez said. Marcus nodded his thanks and appreciation as he released the tension in his wrist and allowed the blade to retract. "Thanks Sanchez." he said. "Don't worry about it _amigo_, just make sure you come back with it stained with the blood of the bastards who took Tailia away." he said. Marcus nodded, stood and left Sanchez with his thoughts and his engineering space.

Marcus walked around for a time then realized that he still hadn't seen his mother yet. Deciding that he needed to rectify that particular problem he headed for the mess decks where he was sure to find the rest of his team members. He arrived after a short walk to find both Chief and Cortana sitting at a table. Marcus grabbed their

attention and made his way over to them. He sat and put his hands on the table. "So I realized something a few days ago and only now have I found the time to act on it." he said. Chief and Cortana were running through scenarios of what Marcus could be talking about. The only thing they could come up with was the one thing they hoped he wasn't going to ask them about.

"Where's Halsey?" he asked. Both Chief and Cortana didn't speak for a time nor could they meet his eye. Marcus noticed this and he narrowed his eyes. "Chief, where's Halsey?" he asked again with more force. Now Chief did really not like this situation, he couldn't lie but he couldn't tell the truth either. He just hoped Marcus wouldn't use the one card Chief was weak against. "Chief, where is my mother?" he asked with venom in his voice. It ended up being Cortana that answered Marcus.

"Marcus, this may be hard for you to hear but, she's switched sides." she said. Marcus turned his focus off of Chief and placed it squarely onto Cortana. "She did what?" he asked bewildered. Cortana took a deep breath and looked him squarely in the eye. "She's working with the Covenant Loyalists now." she said. Marcus was silent for a moment, his hair blocking his eyes from being seen. "How did that happen?" he asked quietly. "Towards the end of the Operations on the planet Requiem, Halsey was taken by Covenant forces to figure out how to talk to the Librarian. She succeeded, shortly after two groups of Spartan-IVs were dispatched to her location, one's mission was recovery, and the other wasâ€¦ termination." she said with a small voice.

Marcus stood ramrod straight. "They failed obviously." he stated matter of factly. "Who was on the termination team?" he asked quietly. Before she could stop herself, Cortana answered. "Commander Sarah Palmer." she said, and then covered her mouth in horror as her eyes widened. Marcus nodded his head, turned and started walking away from the duo.

As soon as he was out of the mess hall, he broke out in a dead sprint towards where he knew the Spartan-IV to be. He had only one thing on his mind; he was going to make that bitch pay for what she did to his mother.

**Well, Boot Camp is over and now that I have my computer I can finally get to work on my Stories. HOO YAH! I'm sure all of you will be happy that I'm back to writing. I know I am. =) I will be continuing my cycle of Updates as fast as I can type and as fast as I can plan out what I want to happen. Have fun guys! Review as you see fit. **

13. Chapter 12

** Author's Note: Sup my bitches, so now I've hit my stories pretty hard, and they are doing well. Though I'm not getting many reviews for The Great Journey, Meh, you guys'll just have to read and review that one after this one. That would make me so happy, anywhere, on to the story.**

Marcus sprinted until he arrived where the Spartan-IVs were staying and paused at the door. He took a deep breath to calm his heart rate and get his breathing under control; it wouldn't do to go in

half-cocked like he really wanted. He stayed liked that for a moment, and then snapped into action drawing his pistol and hitting the door actuator at the same time. The door opened with a hiss and Marcus stepped into what the crew of the Mindour called 'Spartan Country'.

He stopped just inside the door and cast his gaze throughout the room, searching for his target. He finally spotted her at the far end of the room going over something with one of the technicians on her armor. He stalked over to her, pistol still in hand slowly making his way through the room.

The technician spotted him, saw the murderous glint in his eyes and the pistol in his grasp. He decided that discretion was the better part of valor. The technician scrambled over himself trying to get away from the incarnate of death stalking towards them. Palmer looked up in confusion as the tech fled and turned to see what the reason was for that. As soon as she saw the look in Marcus's eyes she knew she was in trouble and with the time it took to get her armor on she was royally screwed.

She dove just as Marcus's arm snapped up and fired. The round soared through the area where her head was previously occupying and pinged off into the bulkhead at the far end of the room. Palmer rolled behind a console and rested her back up against it for a moment. Marcus thought about saying something but he really didn't have anything to say, so he stayed quiet and slowly made his way around the room to get in a position to shoot at her.

Palmer waited for Marcus to say something but after a moment she didn't hear anything, she knew better than to think that he had left so she remained where she was, straining her ears to hear anything that would give Marcus away. But Marcus wasn't giving anything away, having had to try and sneak up on the Chief who is a far cry above Palmer it was laughably easy to keep himself quiet enough to stay undetected by the Spartan-IV.

But even with him ensuring his footsteps were utterly silent he couldn't avoid everything around him. Marcus bumped into a metal canister that fell and created a loud clanging sound as it hit the ground. As soon as the sound was made both Palmer and Marcus exploded into action, Palmer leapt out of her cover and charged Marcus, who was firing his pistol at her. She managed to dodge all the rounds and got in close before Marcus could do anything.

Palmer slapped his pistol out of his hand and attempted to slam her fist into his chest but he was slightly faster than her. He dropped under her swing and swung with his left hand catching her in her solar plexus. Not expecting the strike nor the power behind it, Palmer stumbles back giving Marcus a little breathing room. He extends his forearm blade and settles in his stance that he developed for this weapon.

Palmer spots the blade and pulls out her combat knife which she just remembered was sheathed in her boot. The two fighters stand facing each other not moving a muscle for a moment. Then at the same time they charge at each other. Palmer brings her knife down in an overhead strike while Marcus shoves his forearm blade forward as he brings his other arm up to block the overhead strike.

There was a simultaneous _sshiik_ sound of a pair of blades entering flesh. Marcus grunted as he was driven to his knees as Palmer's blade entered his arm and he could hear the bones groaning under the power of the strike. However, Palmer was much worse off; his blade had caught her in the side and more likely than not hit one of her kidneys. It probably wasn't fatal but she was going to be in pain for a while, unless of course the fight continued.

Palmer coughed up blood as her grip on the knife slackened and she fell to the ground sliding off Marcus's blade with a _squelch_. He stood up off of his knees with his blade still extended and the knife in his forearm. He grunted in pain as he removed the knife from his arm and let it fall with a clatter on the floor. Marcus shifted his gaze from the knife to Palmer as she lay in a slowly growing pool of blood.

Her hand covered the hole in her side but the blood continued to flow from the wound none the less. He stepped over to her so that he was standing over her, casting his shadow over her face. He looked into her eyes and saw something that he never would have guessed he would see—fear. She was afraid of him and what he was doing. "You have brought this upon yourself for attacking my family." Marcus said after a moment.

With his blade still extended, he shoved down to impale her on it. Just as the blade was entering her flesh a green blur slammed into Marcus sending him flying away. The blade had not been sunk all the way into her body but was just deep enough to cut her open when he was flung away. While the hole in Palmer's side and the cut across her stomach were not, by themselves, immediately fatal, without medical attention and together they could prove to be fatal.

Marcus almost let out a feral snarl at the Master Chief as he stood between him and Palmer. He wasn't in any defensive stance that Marcus could detect, though that really didn't mean much. Chief was a Spartan-II for fuck's sake they were always ready to kill something. Marcus noticed that Cortana was crouched over the fallen form of Palmer and was attempting to stop the blood from flowing from her wounds.

Marcus knew that he was no match for both a Spartan-II and an android, so he sheathed his blade, tore a section of his shirt and used it to bind the wound in his arm. Once that was done he turned and started walking away, while Chief's helmeted head followed him. Right as he was about to exit the room he paused at the door. "If I ever see her again, I will not be responsible for my actions." he called over his shoulder and left the room.

Chief let out the breath he was holding and looked back at the two women. Palmer had bandages around her midriff where the two wounds were and she had a slightly pained look on her face. Considering she managed to survive when Marcus had her in his sights, she was lucky to be alive. Chief grimaced, he really didn't like getting in the way of what was assuredly a personal matter but, he couldn't allow his friend, his little brother, to be imprisoned for killing a fellow soldier, even if the bitch deserved it.

"For the record I disagree with our actions on behalf of Commander Palmer." he said in his signature gravelly voice. Cortana looked up from where she was monitoring Palmer's vitals and stared into his

visor. She sighed "I know, but we couldn't allow him to kill another officer of the UNSC, even if he is justified." she replied. Chief said nothing as he returned his gaze to the door that Marcus left from, half expecting the man to return and try to finish what he started.

Silence prevailed for a short time before Cortana spoke again. "She's stabilized but we need to get her down to sickbay quickly. She's lost quiet a lot of blood." she said. Chief grimaced beneath his helmet but nodded anyway as he moved over to the two of them. He unceremoniously and uncaringly slung Palmer over his shoulder and started walking toward the sickbay.

As that was happening, Marcus was heading towards his office/quarters. He had already decided that Palmer was going to die and that she was going to die by his hand. However, he wasn't going to be able to kill her aboard the Mindour. That fact was made painfully clear when Chief and Cortana appeared to stop him. Marcus didn't show it but when they showed up and stopped him it had hurt him deeply. Chief's hit hurt, there's no doubt about that however, knowing that they were essentially protecting his enemy hurt him in a way not many had before.

Marcus was still in a slight daze from what his friends and comrades had done, so wasn't watching where he was going and bumped into someone. The person sprawled on the ground and Marcus was snapped out of his daze. The person on the ground was Ahsoka, and she was rubbing her ass where she had fallen on it. He looked at her for a moment "Sorry, my mind was elsewhere." he said as he extended his hand to her, of course that's when he noticed that the arm he extended was the one covered in blood.

Ahsoka noticed to and leapt to her feet "You're bleeding!" she cried. Marcus made a non-committal grunt and shrugged but apparently Ahsoka wasn't going to take that as an answer. She drug him half-way across the ship to the sickbay where she forced him to sit and allow Dr. Kennesaw to patch up his arm. She gave a sigh as she applied the bandage "Alright, it'll be fine as long as you don't do anything to aggravate it until it heals." she said as she turned back to her table with medical supplies on it. "If you don't mind me asking who did you pick a fight with this time?" she asked. A heavy silence fell on the sickbay as both women waited for Marcus's answer. "Tell me, did you know?" he asked instead. Kennesaw was a little confused as to the content of the question "Did I know what?" she asked. He looked at her with an almost pleading expression on his face "Did you know that the woman responsible for pushing my mother to the enemy was on the ship?" he asked.

There was silence for about a second before Kennesaw exploded "WHAT?! Where's this bitch at, I'll kill her!" she yelled as a familiar glint entered her eyes as had entered Marcus'. Ahsoka was taken aback by the vehemence in her voice and the look in her eyes though it paled when compared to Marcus's own. Then what Marcus's said clicked in her brain. "Wait your mother works for the enemy?" she asked. "Apparently, from what I've gathered, though that isn't much. I think we're going to have to get the full story very soon." Marcus said.

It was at that exact moment that Chief entered the sickbay with the passed out form of Palmer over his shoulder and Cortana trailing

after him. Marcus tensed when they entered and both Ahsoka and Kennesaw noticed it. Neither Chief nor Cortana noticed them at first but when they looked around to find the doctor on duty their eyes settled on the forms of Kennesaw, Marcus and Ahsoka. The five of them said nothing for a moment; they just stood looking at each other.

Eventually Marcus turned his attention back to Kennesaw "Thanks for patching up my arm Doc, am I good to go?" he asked. Kennesaw, without looking at Marcus, responded "Yeah you're good. Don't do anything heavy with that arm for a while and change the bandage after you shower." she said. Marcus nodded though Kennesaw couldn't see it and then proceeded to leave the sickbay. As he passed the Chief and Cortana he didn't spare them a glance, just as he was outside the doors he paused. "One way or another she is going to die." he said, and then left.

The two of them didn't say anything and could only watch as he left. They turned their attention back to Kennesaw and Ahsoka after Marcus had left and were waiting for something to happen. Ahsoka said nothing as she left to find Marcus, while Kennesaw continued to glare at the woman over Chief's shoulders. She closed her eyes, drew in a deep breath and then slowly let it out. "Alright, what happened?" she asked, setting her own emotions aside and putting on her doctor face.

Nothing was said for a few minutes as Kennesaw moved forward to examine the 'patient'. Chief had set the wounded woman down on the bed Kennesaw motioned to and quickly retreated to the door. As Kennesaw was pulling out medical supplies she turned her attention back to the pair standing in her doorway. "Well?" she asked. Cortana took a breath then looked Kennesaw in the eye. "She has multiple blade wounds located around her stomach area." she said. Kennesaw nodded as she grabbed a pair of fabric scissors and cut away what was left of Palmer's shirt.

She pulled the bandages off of the wounds to inspect them. They were deep and most definitely fatal if she wasn't treated soon. Kennesaw played around with the idea of not treating her but then remembered the look on Marcus's face. With that image in mind she got to work fixing Palmer up. She was Marcus's kill, not hers and he wouldn't take too kindly to her stealing his kill. Kennesaw quickly stitched up the gashes in Palmer's body then re-banded them, after that was done she turned back to the Spartan and the AI.

"She'll live, well from these wounds at least. No doubt the next time she encounters the Colonel she won't survive and I for one have no problem with that." she said. Though neither of them wanted to admit it, both Chief and Cortana knew it was true and they had no real way of stopping him short of either confining him to his quarters or posting round the clock guards at the door to the Med-bay. Both of those would need the admiral's approval, but he was either on the bridge or in his quarters and both of those locations were a long way from the med-bay.

Meanwhile, Marcus was marching down a passageway on his way to his quarters. He turned a corner and spotted the door to his quarters and sped up his walking. As he approached, the door slid open automatically and then closed behind him when he entered. He walked straight into the head, stripped, and got in the shower. As he let

the hot water glide over his skin, he just couldn't get the image of Chief and Cortana standing over the prone form of Palmer.

He knew it was reckless of him to just simply charge in like he had but that bitch had stolen his mother away from him and for that she was going to pay. Marcus shut the water off grabbed the towel off the rack and wrapped it around his waist. He stepped out from the head and walked over to his dresser. Marcus paused then after drying himself, let the towel fall to the ground as he started pulling clothes from the dresser. Dressed in black cargo pants, black combat boots, and a black shirt that had UNSC in gunmetal gray on the front and ODST with the flaming skull on the back he sat at his desk and began to plan on how to kill Palmer and get in contact with his mother.

****Author's note:** Well another chapter done. Not exactly my longest chapter but you people have been waiting for a long time for this so there you go. Some may be disappointed with the way I handled the Palmer/Marcus fight. Well sucks to be you! She wasn't in her armor and was caught off guard. Yes that can happen even with Spartans, though we've already come to the conclusion that the IV's aren't Spartans but I digress. Until the next time my Bitches. ******

End
file.